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ON

CHARLES J. DUNPHIE'S ESSAYS.

"Brilliant essays."—*Quarterly Review.*

"There are some really good sallies in these essays and in the poems, both English and Latin."—*Contemporary Review.*

"The author discourses in a pleasant vein of irony, and playful allusion on a variety of topics of a light kind, and describes a rural or river-side scene, or sketches a character with a true artistic touch."—*Truth.*

"Mr. Dunphie's volume of essays and poems, collected under the misleading title 'Sweet Sleep,' is really very lively reading. His style is easy and polished, and though there is never a trace of effort to display his knowledge, his book furnishes abundant evidence that he has read widely and appreciatively."—*Scotsman.*

"Mr. Dunphie may fairly claim to have inherited the mantle of dear, genial, chatty, ever-welcome Charles Lamb. He has much of the same grace, simplicity, and quaintness—much of the same confidential manner of button-holding the reader and telling him some pleasant anecdotes or imparting some whimsical fancy."—*Era.*

"Mr. Charles Dunphie is a scholar. He writes a fair English, and is withal very pleasant and kindly. We acknowledge having read all Mr. Dunphie's volume, and with pride we lay claim to dauntless and invincible wakefulness."—*Vanity Fair.*

"Here is a book before me called 'Sweet Sleep.' An author who adopts this title boldly disarms criticism, unless the work keeps the reader awake. . . . The only fault I can find with Mr. Dunphie's 'Sweet Sleep' is that when you have read one essay you will probably want to read the next, and most certainly you will if you commence with the melancholy story (it is a ghost story) of the celebrated unfortunate Miss Bailey, done into Latin in a style that would have delighted old Father Prout."—*Punch.*

"A pleasant summer book, delicately humorous and quaintly anciful, of varied interest, never exciting by thrilling narrative or passionate appeal, and never lapsing into dulness, but gently and cheeringly babbling on like a meadow brook. Mr. Dunphie's volume of Essays and Poems will make a charming companion for the tourist and the sojourner among the mountains or by the seashore."—*Philadelphia Inquirer.*

"Abundant in light and shade, full of wit and satire, here serious, there jocose, and withal genial and entirely free from coarseness."—*Stamford Mercury.*

"Any one who wants a thoroughly pleasant and enjoyable volume, which will quietly stir up agreeable thoughts without giving the reader much trouble, will find Mr. Charles Dunphie's 'Sweet Sleep' just the work for the occasion."—*Pictorial World.*

"Charles Dunphie's Essays are Addisonian in grace and Addisonian in simple scholarship. His Latin poems remind one of the lost style of Father Prout at his best."—*Freeman's Journal.*

"The author discourses after an easy, flowing, chatty fashion, and in a spirit partly of playful cynicism and partly of genial good humour about 'everything and something else.' And languages appear to be to him matters of as much, or almost as much, indifference as subjects. At any rate, he is evidently more or less familiar with certain ancient as well as modern tongues besides his own mother tongue, and the facility with which he rhymes in Latin renders it not improbable that, had fate or inclination driven him in that direction, he might have successfully occupied the line vacated by the late celebrated Father Prout."—*Illustrated London News.*

THE CHAMELEON.

FUGITIVE FANCIES

ON MANY-COLOURED MATTERS.

94458

BY

CHARLES J. DUNPHIE,

AUTHOR OF "WILDFIRE," "SWEET SLEEP," ETC., ETC.

London:

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12, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

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RICHARD CLAY & SONS,
BREAD STREET HILL, LONDON,
Bungay, Suffolk.

TO

Thomas Lane Coward, Esq.,

OF CHISWICK,

WHOSE NEVER-FAILING KINDNESS AND GENIAL WIT

ENDEAR HIM TO ALL WHO HAVE THE

PRIVILEGE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP,

This Book

IS, WITH SINCERE ESTEEM, DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE DUTY AND DELIGHT OF BEING IN DEBT	1
THE ARCH-IMPOSTOR	11
AD SPEM AUDACTER MENDACEM	18
THE SORROWS OF SUCCESS	19
OCTOBER	27
THE ART OF SMILING	33
SLANG	38
AD PUELLAM CARISSIMAM	45
A MISPRIZED FRIEND	46
AD TUSSIM MEAM DILECTAM	54
THE LOST ENCHANTMENT	55
THE PEST OF GOOD ADVICE	67
THE FOSSILS AT CHARING CROSS	73
THE SCIENCE OF LUCK	77
JULY MOUNTAINEERING IN LONDON	84
THE BLISS OF BEING BY YOURSELF	91
WINTER BY THE SEA-SIDE	96
COQUETTES AND PRUDES	101
PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEEN BETTER DAYS	111
FEBRUARY FANCIES	124
HOMO ET ANIMA SUA	129
CHILDREN	130

	PAGE
GRACE	137
THE LONDON FOG	146
THE ANGEL VANITY	151
PEOPLE WHO WON'T GIVE IN	162
THE DEGENERACY OF DIALOGUE	172
THE ASS	179
THE PLEASURES OF DISCONTENT	190
PRATTLERS AND FENDER-WEARERS	199
HONEYMOONS	203
THE USES AND ABUSES OF BURLESQUE	210
THE WILD VICISSITUDES OF TASTE	217
CASTLES IN THE AIR	223
THE PLEASURES OF TEA	227
OVER-DOING IT	239
TRAFALGAR SQUARE	245
DISAPPOINTMENT	246
OUR CITIZEN PLANE TREE	255
AD FRONDATOREM INSIGNEM	257
THE SWEETS AND SOURS OF SUNDAY	258
CURIOSITY	270
FANCIFUL ATTACHMENTS	274
MOONSHINE	285
"HOW IS IT WITH THEE, SWEET?"	299
RANDOM CURIOSITIES OF RACING	300
ASINI OMNES	314

THE CHAMELEON.

THE DUTY AND DELIGHT OF BEING IN DEBT.

THE objection which some people feel to being in debt is not to be justified upon any grounds of philosophy, whether natural or moral. All the analogies are against it. Everybody and everything under the canopy of heaven is in debt to somebody or something else. Examine the question dispassionately, and you shall find that indebtedness is the first great law of the universe. The fruits and flowers of the earth are *indebted* to the sun for their ripeness and beauty. The moon lives on *borrowed* silver; the sea *owes* its multitudinous waters to the in-flowing rivers; the rainbow its prismatic colours to the sunbeams and the showers. Rain *lends* verdure to the landscape; distance *lends* enchantment to the

view; and any lady or gentleman who, following these noble precedents, would like to lend me £500, is at liberty to do so.

Nature is a Pawnbroker in a large way of business, and the elements are but her assistants. Debt, the vital principle of the physical world, is also the cement of society. Indeed it is not too much to say that, as all mathematics may be reduced to a point, and all cookery to an onion, even so may the complex arrangements of all sublunary affairs be traced back to three letters, I O U. Or if—to speak personally—I *don't* owe you, the fault is yours, not mine.

What stuff it is to talk about the glorious privilege of being independent! Independence! There is no such thing at this side of the river Styx. We all depend upon one another for everything that administers to our mutual comfort and security. In the general recognition of this fact dwells the truest bond of good-fellowship. It is the basis alike of love and of friendship. Man is indebted to his wife—Woman, for all that makes life beautiful and delightful; also for occasional bits of her mind, which must always be acceptable, considering how little he has of his own. Woman is indebted to her husband—Man, for delicacies both of table and toilet; also

for no inconsiderable ill-usage, which tends to the development in her of that sweetest of Christian virtues—Patience. And so through all the ramifications of the social system. "En naissant on contracte avec la patrie une dette immense dont on ne peut jamais s'acquitter." So spake Rousseau; and so speaking proved himself a true philosopher. It may not be inappropriate, and certainly it is not incorrect, to add that the Present Reader is indebted to the Present Writer for much of that supercilious enjoyment which springs from the contemplation of absurdity; and that the Present Writer owes to the Present Reader all the happiness to be derived from the observation of personal beauty, moral worth, and intellectual splendour.

"Out of Debt out of danger," says the proverb, which is as much as to say, "Out of the World out of danger," seeing that as long as you are in the world you are bound to be in debt. There is a romantic fascination in danger: so too is there in debt, which is but another form of peril. "Better go to bed without supper than rise in debt in the morning." So runs, or rather limps, the ancient English adage; but it is absurd. If the argument be good for supper, it is equally good for breakfast, luncheon, and dinner; and what can be more

preposterous than to maintain that a poor man had better go without those meals than get them on credit? 'Odspittikins! he would die of starvation.

All the days of our lives we are in a circle of debt from which we can be released only by paying another debt—the greatest of all—that to nature. We owe our birth to our fathers and mothers, our death (not unfrequently) to the doctors. We have only a loan of this beautiful planet; nor is there anything apparently ours which did not belong to somebody else before we owned it. Is it not so, dear reader mine? Your coat belonged to a sheep, your hat to a silk-worm, your boots to a calf, your gloves to a kid. The very wife of your bosom was the property of her parents before you possessed her; and though she is the wife of *your* bosom now she may one day be the wife of another man's bosom, and, what's more, you may live to see it.

Of all forms of indebtedness, the pecuniary is the pleasantest. Plutarch, to be sure, has written a long and learned disquisition to the contrary; but who cares for Plutarch? A safer guide is Erasmus, who expressly lays it down—"Imo nulla est commodior ad regnum via quam debere quamplurimis"—verily there is no course more convenient for a nation than to be in debt to as many people as possible. Lord

Beaconsfield called our national debt of £748,000,000 a flea-bite, and attributed to that tiny puncture all our prosperity. And what is true of nations is not less so of individuals. Rabelais treats the matter with his wonted waggery of wisdom in his famous account of the conversation between Pantagruel and Panurge. The latter having endeavoured to demonstrate the great wickedness of thrift, and that extravagance is a practice flowing from all the four cardinal virtues, the former asks—"But, my good fellow, when will you be out of debt?"—to which Panurge makes answer—"At the Greek calends, when all the world shall be content, and you become your own heir. Marry come up! Heaven forbid that I should be out of debt, or I could not be trusted. Who leaves not some leaven overnight will hardly have paste the next morning."

The only drawback to which the noble policy of running into debt and staying there is subject arises from the perverse, not to say inhuman, view which creditors occasionally take of the question. Unmindful of the dignity belonging to their character, and oblivious of Montaigne's generous maxim, "the man who receives a benefit obliges the giver," they will keep meddling with their benefactors; that is to say their debtors, dunning for payment which may not

be convenient to *them*, and which would in no sense conduce to the honour of the dunners. Exceedingly trying to the temper of debtors is all such interference. Strange to say, it is not, or was not, confined to the human species, for my friend Mr. Ashton, in that pleasant book of his, *Social Life in England in the Time of Queen Anne*, tells us of a scandalously inquisitive jackass which in those days was exhibited among the wonders of Bartholomew Fair, and which possessed among other accomplishments this exceedingly objectionable one:—"Turn him loose in the room, without either bridle or halter on his head, although there were a hundred people in the room, some paying as they come in, and some not paying, yet, let them sit and be mixed one amongst another, he will find them out that have not payed from the rest." This sort of thing, whether in man or beast, is extremely annoying. Prythee, let us have no more of it.

Among the saddest signs of the times, indicating perhaps that a period of national decadence has set in, are the establishment of Co-Operative Stores and the adoption of their ready-money principles of commerce by meanly—imitative shopkeepers. The result is that by insidious appeal to one of the shabbiest passions of human nature, the desire to

buy things cheaply,—the noblest outcome of civilization—mutual trust and confidence—is undermined, and the fabric of society seriously imperilled. It must strike the most unreflecting, that the quality which distinguishes advanced humanity from its barbarous predecessors is *faith*. The savage, like Hal-o'-the-Wynd, fights for his own hand, which is against every man as every man's is against him; but "the heir of all the ages in the foremost files of time" does not look upon every one as an enemy, nor (unless when he carries as a plaything a harmless necessary revolver) does he go armed against him; for he has learnt, in the long course of improving ages, to trust his fellow and allow him to get into debt. It is upon this precious principle that the foundations of human intercourse rest—a principle seriously disturbed by the ignoble practice of "paying on the nail," as it is vulgarly called, the very phrase showing the harmful nature of the proceeding, for who could be comfortable on a nail? How far the fatal heresy may have now spread is more than I can undertake to affirm, but I remember a little incident which occurred some years ago, and which is worth the telling, as it exhibits the evils of the system in a light which may be new to many. I called one morning upon a tradesman, whom I found busy in

making out his Christmas bills, and I, being then young and green of judgment, sympathetically exclaimed, "Ah, what a good thing it would be if everybody could pay ready-money, for then there would be no bills to make out." A look of astonishment and fear mounted on my friend's moderately expressive countenance, and he said, "I should be very sorry if that were to occur, for people who pay ready-money only buy what they absolutely want, while those who run bills gratify their tastes and fancies in a way very grateful to the tradesman." I felt the force of his remarks, and to prove that I did so I gave him then and there a very extensive order. The many charming letters I have since received from that worthy man, all bearing upon his 'little account,' are among the most precious gems of my correspondence. Never have I forgotten his words of wisdom, and the admirable theory of business they inculcated. To buy only what you want! Can anything be more dull and mean? It is the pleasing extravagance of purchasing what he does *not* want that distinguishes the man of taste and spirit from the tame dullard; and you are the one or the other, accordingly to whether your dealings are by cash or by credit.

There is another aspect of debt which has a still

greater charm, and indeed is intimately associated with the finest feelings of our nature. It relates to the tender sentiment engendered between the debtor and the creditor. Say that I pay for the article I purchase. There is no tie to bind me to the seller. I go my way and am clean forgotten. If I become poor, miserable, and ill, he recks not. Nay, though I should die he would not shed a tear. Not being in his ledger, neither am I in "the book and volume" of his memory. But if I have not indulged in the prosaic process of payment, how different are our relations! He never forgets me—never, oh, never! I have a cherished place in his remembrance. Ever and anon he sends me sweet mementoes. If Fortune frowns upon me, he is filled with mournful solicitude. If sickness afflicts me, he too suffers with tremulous sympathy. If the writ, relentless from fell Pluto's court, consigns me to the narrow cell no prisoner ever leaves, the lamentation of my creditor will be the loudest, his mourning the most sincere; and when friends have forgotten me and lovers supplied my place, *his* grief will still be green.

Nor will the debtor, if he have any grace, fail to behave towards his creditor with becoming reverence. It is the office of the gods to give, of men to receive. This being so, it stands to reason that the creditor,

who is the giver, partakes a celestial character, and is as superior to the debtor, who is the receiver, as are the immortal denizens of Olympus to the ephemeral children of Deucalion. Your creditor has a vested interest in you, and is in a sense your proprietor. Have a heed, then, that you treat him with the distinction due to his dignity and position. If he dun you, as he in his ignorance may deem himself entitled to do, tell him not to pay his own debts and leave off meddling with yours. *That* were to answer with an idle tongue. Nor should you on any account follow the example of the Irish gentleman who wrote to his tailor in these terms—"Sir, If you continue to importune me with applications for the money I owe you, I shall place your letters in the hands of my solicitor." To go to law with your creditor on any such issue as this, would be most imprudent. Soothe him rather with gentle words, and hold his name in benediction all the days of your life. Forget him not at any period of your earthly career. Nothing in history is more touching, more edifying, than that when Socrates lay on his death-bed, one of his last words was that he owed about nine-pence to Æsculapius.

THE ARCH-IMPOSTOR.

NOBODY in this world enjoys more confidence and deserves less than the so-called angel—Hope. She never leaves us alone; she is the plague and bother of our lives. From the cradle to the grave men and women are her fools, her slaves, her martyrs. Queen of Impostors, she picks their pockets, and knocks about their ears to-day the beautiful castles which yesterday she built for them—in the air; yet no deception of hers, however gross or impudent, will shake their faith in her. She cheats them to the face; but she fascinates like sinning; and on they go, trusting her to the last. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." True enough: and that is the reason why the human breast is in a state of perpetual turmoil and trouble. The false Pleasures have been melodiously celebrated; the true Miseries of Hope have yet to be sung.

"Ego diligentes me diligo, et qui me quærunt pacem invenient." Such is the noble promise addressed to her votaries by that respectable and trustworthy goddess TRUTH, speaking through the pen of Ignatius in his touching epistle to Maria Cassabolita. "I love those who love me; and they who seek me shall find peace." And Truth is ever as good as her word. How different is the conduct of that siren Hope! Those who love her she lures to their undoing; and they who seek her shall find confusion. Fame and fortune, honour, dominion, glory and renown, these are the pretty baits she dangles before the eyes of her dupes only to befool them. Yet strange as sad to say so does she bewitch us that no efforts of ours are effectual to resist her blandishments. Seldom indeed are such attempts made; and when made they are of about as much avail as the exploit of that gallant gentleman famed in ancient story who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park-gates.

> "Hora sic peragit citata cursum;
> Sic diem sequitur dies fugacem!
> Spes novas nova lux parit secunda
> Spondens omnia credulis homullis."

'Promise-crammed' indeed we are, relishing a diet which capons would disdain.

"White-handed Hope, thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings!" So sings Milton; whose song suggests Dr. Primrose's commentary, brief but emphatic—'Fudge!' White-handed indeed! Not all the waters in the Serpentine and the New River combined, not all the soaps in Mr. Pears' world-renowned factory could cleanse hands tainted and tarnished with such frauds and robberies. Angel, forsooth! She is a juggler, a charlatan, a thief, a cozener, full of wiles and deceits, not to be credited on her oath, not to be trusted round the corner for change of a shilling. The Thimble-Rigger on Epsom Downs is a respectable member of society in contrast with her. The gentlemen who practise the 'Confidence-trick' upon unsuspecting country-folk are models of guileless Virtue in comparison.

When the cut-throat known as Alexander the Great went forth to civilize the East—that is to say, to let slip the dogs of war and to carry fire and sword into peaceful happy regions—he was asked what companion he meant to take with him. He made answer—Hope. And truly he could not have chosen a fitter accomplice for his nefarious designs. Alfred Nettement has given a fanciful parody of the anecdote—fanciful, indeed, and elegant, but Oh! how deceptive for the befooling of young people. "La

jeunesse part pour la conquete d'une terre lointaine —l'Avenir. Laissons lui donc ce qu' Alexandre s'etait réservé en partant pour la conquete de l'Orient —l'Esperance." Youth sets out for the conquest of a foreign land—the Future. Let us leave to Youth what Alexander reserved for himself when he set out for the conquest of the East—Hope. Just so: and a pretty dance she leads the youngsters—betraying them with false promises, prompting them to mad enterprises, and sending them on wild-goose chases which only end in their undoing.

"Hope told a flattering tale that Joy would soon return." But Joy did not return. She had no notion of doing so. Nevertheless, Hope goes on repeating the same humbugging story over and over again, as unblushingly as ever; and the people whom she has so often bamboozled still believe her as implicitly as though they had never detected her in a falsehood. Talk of her being the "bright seraph who gladdens our fate!" Go to! She has wrecked more fortunes, broken more hearts, than all the Furies put together. Blower of soap-bubbles, concocter of swindles, mother of bankruptcies, she it is who lures us into wild projects, tempts us into disastrous ventures, and then laughs at us. She has no more sorrow for us when we lay down our lives in

her service than had William III. for poor Mr. Godfrey, the Governor of the Bank of England, who was killed in the trenches at Namur. "What business had he there?" asked the icy-hearted King; and on he went eating his dinner, with about as much concern as he would have shown if the poor fellow who had followed in the hope of serving him had been a fly or a worm.

Who are they who make human ambition a by-word, human glory a jest? They are those who, as Dr. Johnson prettily phrases it, "listen with credulity to the whispers of Fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of Hope." They and their kindred are penniless; their homes are desolate; the fire is extinguished on their hearths; their places shall know them no more; their bones whiten every shore. How many a life has been ruined past repair, and all for a dream! "Spes, somnium vigilantis"—"the dream of a man awake," such is Quintillian's definition of hope—a definition which Mat Prior has boldly appropriated in his well-known line, "Hope is but the dream of those that wake." And who so senseless as to believe a dream? Who? Every one. All the world and his wife; not "wimming and shildring" alone, as Claverhouse was wont to call the good section of humanity, but bearded men as

well, who assuredly ought to know better. Ah me! Sad it is to think that Wisdom warns in vain, and that Experience is like a lamp in the stern shedding light, indeed, upon the waters we have passed, but leaving in utter darkness those we have yet to traverse.

> "The ample proposition that Hope makes,
> In all designs begun on earth below,
> Fails in the promised largeness."

True, SWEET WILLIE, all too true; but, unmindful of thy words, we go on hoping as persistently as ever, and will do so till the end of the chapter.

And the worst of Hope is that there is nothing behind her. The man who hopes can do no more. He has played his last card. He hopes, and there's an end. Molière has expressed this thought in very dainty verse—

> "L'Espoir, il est vrai, nous soulage,
> Et nous berce, un temps, notre ennui;
> Mais, Philis, le triste avantage,
> Lorsque rien ne marche après lui!"

What is the lesson to be deduced from these reflections? Simply this. Rely on Patience rather than on Hope. "Though Patience be a tired mare yet she will plod," says poor Corporal Nymm, and if you want a 'mount' surely it is better to ride a steady

old plodder than to trust your neck to a bolter. Jog on as best you may; but set not your heart on anything; take Fortune's buffets and rewards with equal thanks, like the imperturbable gentleman in the play. "Expectation fainteth, longing for what it hath not." Happy, thrice happy they who have no expectations, for verily they will never be disappointed.

AD SPEM AUDACTER MENDACEM.

PROH pudor, Spes, quæ generi dolosa
Semper humano domina adfuisti;
Opprimis fortes simul et sagaces;
Pascis inanes!

Hei mihi vanas comitamur umbras!
Tu duces pellis gravitate claros.
Rectius vives capiesque Græcis
Magna Kalendis.

Vivis ex rapto, malesuada virgo,
Pauperem pannis spoliasque veste;
Tuque mendicum spolias metallis;
Æraque tollis.

Quid tui causa patimur piget te!
Non tibi curæ pecudum ruina
Dira quas cladi miseræ intulisti
Usque dolendas!

Nosque, te freti, male pollicenti
Prosperos ventos placidumque pontum,
Quam sumus stulti! pelago patenti
Velificamur.

Contrahit cœlum subito procella!
Vexat et nimbus tonitrusque fluctus;
Cogis in Syrtes nimiis carinam
Flatibus actam

THE SORROWS OF SUCCESS.

MEN are wont to regard failure as the greatest of misfortunes and success as a supreme blessing. It is a vulgar error and worthy of the vulgar, seeing that nothing can be more absurd. "Happy is the peach that is sunned on both sides," says the Eastern proverb; but the adage will hardly endure logical analysis. Such fruit invites the wasps, how then should it be happy? Nor can it conduce to the felicity of the eater, the excessive sweetness of the one side uncorrected by any delicate acidity in the other being manifestly injurious to the digestion.

The dazzling splendour of the sunshine is not to be compared for comfort to the cool serenity of the shade. Modest merit seeks the shade; and as surely as it does so it is left there, the world wisely concluding that modest merit must be the best judge of what is good for it. *Bref*, failure has

its priceless pleasures as well as its trivial penalties; and among the saddest of human tribulations are the sorrows of success.

When we pause to count the cost of eminence we are fairly staggered to think at what a sacrifice of all that is most precious and delightful in existence we are content to purchase an unsubstantial and vanishing possession. Consider the position of a successful man. What can be more painful, more distressing? Beset with arduous responsibilities and sickening solicitudes, encompassed on all hands by care and trouble—his days full of work and worry his nights sleepless and disturbed—he cannot call his life (nor yet his wife) his own. Prosperity he has won; but peace of mind is gone for ever. The demon 'Business' holds him in a pitiless vice; he is dragged at the chariot-wheels of his own triumph.

With the woful condition of this sorrow-stricken slave of success compare the free estate, the joyous liberty of the unsuccessful man. Lord of himself, that heritage of fun, he has time to be happy. The doctor without patients, the lawyer without clients, the trader without customers—these are the men, and these alone, who may be said to enjoy life. Not for them burns the midnight lamp; not to their doors comes the unwelcome summons calling them to

toil at daybreak. They may go to bed as early and get up as late as they please. They are in the comfortable case of Béranger's merry-go-lucky monarch, who missed fame but found felicity.

"There was a King of Ivitite,
But little known in story,
Who dined at ease and slept all night
Without a scrap of glory."

It is your unsuccessful man to whom life is a garden glowing with flowers, not a wilderness bristling with thorns and briars. His paths are paths of pleasantness, and all his ways are peace. No invitations to opera or play, to ball or supper, to Ascot or Goodwood, to river picnic, to rambles through the Highlands, or fishing trips to Norway, need he refuse on the plea that he is too busy. He is never busy; he knows better than to put himself out on any account. Why should he? "Il n'y a pas pourquoi." Unlike the poor bondsman of success, he has no duties, no engagements to interfere with his enjoyments. He can afford to take it easy; and he does so. Who shall blame him?

"To suffer is nothing; we must all suffer. There is only one misfortune that can befall a man—to fail." So says Jules Simon. He never was more mistaken in his life. To fail is to be happy.

Happiness is out of the question where there is no time either for rest or recreation. Though the world should overflow with delights, they are worthless to him who has not leisure to partake of them. And such a poor, harassed, careworn creature is he who has 'succeeded.' So true is it that prosperity is not without its pains, nor failure without its consolations. Let us have a song.

HURRAH FOR THE MEN WHO FAIL.

THE men who succeed have a weary fight,
A terrible time have they;
They work all day and they work all night;
They've never a chance of play.
Romantic mountains and flashing waves,
Mead, forest, and verdant vale,
Are to them unknown, the poor tethered slaves,
Hurrah for the men who fail!

The men who fail dwell in tranquil bliss,
No troubles their peace oppress,
If they miss the honours they also miss
The sorrows of success.
Their way of life has a gay intent,
It admits of some pleasant pauses;
Propter vitam never will they consent,
Vivendi perdere causas.

They've time to be happy; *they* taste the joys
That to human life belong;

No distracting projects their minds employ,
Their livers never go wrong.
Their lot is a *lot* of delightful ease,
And at Fortune they dare not rail,
They go where they like, and they do as they please,
Three cheers for the men who fail!

That idle men contribute by their very idleness to their own dignity and that of human nature is an opinion which found favour with the wisest of the ancient Spartans. Of this fact there is a remarkable illustration in Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus* —"A Lacedemonian happening to be in Athens when the Court was sitting, was informed of a man who was fined for idleness; and when the poor fellow was returning home in great dejection attended by his condoling friends, the Lacedemonian desired the crowd to show him the person who had been punished *for keeping up his dignity.*" "So much beneath them," adds Plutarch, "they reckoned all attention to mechanic arts and all desire of riches." There is something quite Hibernian in the humour of this story.

But it is not merely in the contemplation of their superior opportunities for the enjoyment of existence that men who have failed may find solace for their so-called ill-luck. They may find it also in the reflection how valueless, how evanescent is that prize

for which the successful are willing to give up all that makes life worth the having. "What is glory? What is gain? Heavier toil, superior pain." "Gloria mundi fumus"—the glory of the world is smoke. They who have won it have proved it so. How many great men were there who, though famous in their generation, sleep now in some solitary corners—victims of the oblivion of ages? How many civilizations have perished in India, Egypt, and Upper Asia? The magnates of China are ignored by Europe, and those of Europe are ignored by China.

"Weigh Hannibal;" if you can find him. What has become of that yet greater Conqueror, whose name meant ruin, and whose sword laid empires desolate? Read his epitaph—"Sufficit huic tumulus cui non sufficerat orbis"—here a grave is enough for him for whom once a world was not sufficient. What is he doing now? "All he has now got to do is to be dead," says Victor Hugo. "Alexandre fait ceci qu'il est mort." Hamlet traces the dust of the Macedonian to the stopping of a bung-hole. "Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he finds it stopping a bung-hole?" And as for Cæsar, the imperious Cæsar—well, all we know is that at this very moment he may peradventure be patching a wall to expel the winter's flaw, thus

doing a better service to humanity than he ever did ere yet he was dead and turned to clay. And these, be it remembered, were pre-eminently the successful men of their day—the men whose word was law, and with whom failure meant infamy.

Of the sorrows attendant on success, not the least sorrowful is the ill-will that it engenders. The successful are slandered and hated; but nobody thinks it worth his while to calumniate or execrate men who have failed. They are pitied, not abhorred. If the world were wiser they would be envied and admired; but the world goes by appearance, and never cares to look beneath the surface.

Then again, what a bother it must be for the successful to be continually pointed at and intruded upon, to have their privacy incessantly invaded, and to be gaped at as though they were monsters or raree-shows! Who ever heard of people running after an unsuccessful man, staring in his face, or pestering him for his portrait or his autograph? No poetess solicits him to write in her album; no match-making dowager angles for him; no sentimental spinster sues for a lock of his hair. In right of his obscurity he enjoys perfect freedom and far higher dignity than the favourites of Fortune may ever pretend to. *Crede experto.*

The unsuccessful man has many resources denied to his more prosperous neighbours. Say, that he does not earn money—what then? He can borrow. Up to a certain point, and until his credit is utterly gone, there are always certain well-to-do butter-hearted people willing to lend to a good fellow, who like poor Mr. Parolles has been 'cruelly scratched' by Fortune. When he can no longer borrow he may beg. "The last on't, the warst on't is only for to beg," sings the Caledonian bard; and of all the trades a-going a-begging is proverbially the best. Even though that noble vocation dear to Homer and Belisarius should be denied him, he may go into the Union. In the last resort he may steal. No man need starve in a land where his more industrious fellow-countrymen are prepared to support him, whether in a workhouse or in a prison.

OCTOBER.

"FAREWELL goes out sighing." Of nothing is this pretty saying of Ulysses more true than of the dying summer. Verily she goes out sighing; and all the world partakes her dejection. The drawing in of the days as though at the vanishing of such a guest the sun could no longer find it in his splendid heart to shine, the tender shades of evening, the tearful rain, the dirge elegiac of the wind wailing through dishevelled woods, the disconsolate aspect of the sky, the very rustling of the yellow leaves which look to a fanciful view like the golden wings that Summer is about to fly away on—all, all may be interpreted as so many proofs of the sorrow with which Nature contemplates the departure of the beautiful Being who had gladdened and glorified her.

THE DEATH OF SUMMER.

THE rain that falls when days decrease,
And nights more gloom are gaining,
What is it but sad Nature's tears
That Summer is a-waning!

The melancholy wind which then
O'er hill and dale is sighing,
What is it but sad Nature's dirge
That Summer is a-dying!

The yellow leaves, too, which the gales
So insolently play on,
What are they but the golden wings
That Summer flies away on!

She has left us. And how she is missed! Missed! Ah yes. Spoken in allusion to our lost loved ones, what sadder word is there in human speech than that word *missed?* Yet it may be that it is not without a salutary service. Does not the poignant sense of bereavement it expresses carry with it a consolatory balm, enabling us to view with no invincible aversion the coming of the day when we too —well, if not 'missed,' shall at all events be past the sorrow of separation—free for evermore from the pang of parting?

"*Au revoir!*" shouts Youth to the dying Summer. "Farewell!" sighs Age, distrustful of to-morrow.

At no period of the year is summer so grievously

mourned both by old and young as in the month of October. The reason, of course, is that the bereavement is then so recent. Our wound is 'green,' and many sorrowful mementoes of the friend we have lost yet linger to sadden us. Time brings healing on its wings; and as the year wears on we become, if not reconciled, at least inured to its wintry rigour. In October the golden smile of summer still haunts us in memory; and ere yet we reach a philosophic state our spirits suffer a sad eclipse. In truth, transitions are for the most part mournful, and few are more so than that from summer to winter, through the intermediate valley of autumn. Of all seasons, autumn is assuredly the most pathetic. What makes it so is not alone that then the woods wear a hectic hue—beautiful it may be, yet premonitory of decay—and that the surly gale is strewn with the ruined garniture of grove and garden, as that we have winter in prospective. *That* season, for all its terrors, has still its pleasant promises. It is the rude harbinger of spring—fresh, gladsome, hopeful spring, when nature wakens from her trance and prepares to clothe herself anew with brightness and beauty as with a garment. Yet Winter *is* awfully stern; and October, let the poets romance as they may about it, is indeed a melancholy month, for

We scent the elemental war
Of stormy winter from afar,
When autumn leaves are falling.

Edward Spencer, to be sure, describes October as "full of merry glee," which it may perhaps have been in his age, for the seasons change; and Leigh Hunt has drawn upon his fancy for a fascinating picture—"The days if short are crisp and gray, and though the swallows and house-martins leave our tempestuous shores for calmer, sunnier latitudes, we must not forget that they are succeeded by other winged visitors, who—all things being comparative—find here a hospitable shelter from the bleak regions encircled by the Northern seas. The ring-ousel, the red-wing, the snipe, the field-fare, the wood-pigeon, and other feathered ladies and gentlemen who shall be nameless because I really don't know their names, are on their way hither. That parson of the woods, the Rev. Mr. Rook, has returned to his pulpit in the roost-tree, and is getting ready his sermon. Hear him for his *caws!* Meanwhile our own jolly little robin redbreast is tuning his sweet pipe for a ballad. He loves a naked tree, and the more leafless the bough he is perched on, the merrier is his song." Yet after all said and done October is a sorrowful month. How tragic is the

expression of the sky! It is a "cruel sky," as Chaucer says. On the hill-side the air "bites shrewdly"; it is "a nipping and an eager air," as that which swept athwart the ramparts of Elsinore, what time the buried majesty of Denmark revisited the glimpses of the Moon. How woful is the voice of the storm careering over the sea!—how desolate the aspect of the sea-side landscape! Ah, yes, it is a sad season. *Cantemus!*

Now Nature, reft of pomp and pride,
Must cast the flowery garbs aside
That radiantly enrobe her.
The magic spell that summer makes
Thy disenchanting presence breaks,
O pitiless October!

Thy days are gray; and poets tell
Such days in loveliness excel,
Their tone 's so soft and sober;
But people who are gray themselves,
And sobered, too—unlucky elves!—
Don't need gray days, October!

Besides, who heeds what poets sing!
Romance o'er all dark scenes they fling,
And O, they are such liars!
Illusion right and left they shed,
And "take all colours," Byron said,
Just "like the hands of dyers."

No! Give us Springtime gay and bright,
With hearts unfettered, fresh and light,

And spirit like a feather;
And they may have October bleak
Who still a strange enjoyment seek
In melancholy weather.

Yet is not October without its picturesque compensations. At no other period of the year are there such splendid sunsets. Even as these evanescent lines are being written in northern latitudes, on the last day of the month, how magnificent is the sunset —the glorious Euthanasia of a dark tempestuous day! Superb beyond all description is the spectacle, as, ere yet he slowly sinks behind a cloud-cliff of darkest purple-blue, the sun beautifies the western horizon, waving his many-coloured banners from the citadels of his castles in the air, burnishing the landscape with a flood of roseate gold, and suffusing with soft tender light the heaving bosom of the amethyst sea. He is gone! And now comes the after-glow, a sight not to be surpassed for pathetic beauty and melancholy grace. In tremulous relief against the lemon-toned sky stands one solitary tree of finest form, upon whose rustling leaves and waving branches that unseen minstrel the Wind is playing caressingly as upon some mystical instrument. It is a lovely scene, yet tragical in its loveliness, for summer is over, the day is far-spent, and "farewell goes out sighing."

THE ART OF SMILING.

AMONG human beings there is a widespread belief that they alone know how to laugh, weep, and sigh. There can be no greater mistake. The hyena laughs —I have heard him at the Zoological Gardens. Tears course one another down the 'innocent nose' and guilty lips of the stag—I have seen them in Greenwich Park. Various animals sigh to perfection, as everybody knows who knows anything. But there is an art of which humanity enjoys undisputed monopoly —the priceless art of smiling. Man can smile; so can woman. These two are the only smilers in the world. Who ever heard of a smiling pig? A smiling 'Duck' is, to be sure, no uncommon object; but the lovely bird in question is unfeathered, or feathered only as to the bonnet.

Dr. Johnson's definition of the verb 'smile' is exhaustive. "To smile—to throw the countenance,

especially the mouth, in a condition expressive of pleasure, love, or gladness." This act of 'throwing' demands forethought, implies a deliberate purpose; and that is, no doubt, the reason why though fathers and mothers may smile the faculty is beyond the reach of their infant progeny. I am not a mother (as yet), and therefore cannot bring maternal testimony to the authentication of the assertion that babies never smile; but so careful an observer as Châteaubriand has taken note of the fact—"L'enfant manque de la plus belle des graces—le sourire. Il rit, et ne sourit pas."

Though Fontenelle assures us that there are pretty women who know how to laugh but not to smile such cases are very exceptional. The sex are, as a rule, adepts in the enchanting accomplishment. A French philosopher remarks that women smile willingly when they have fine teeth, which only proves their native kindness in revealing for the admiration of others charms which the illiberal would keep churlishly to themselves. A mouthful of ivory encircled with lips of coral is a sight for the gods.

Of female smiles, infinite and bewitching in their variety, the most celebrated is probably Andromache's, of which there is immortal mention in the *Iliad*. Before going into battle Hector bids fond farewell to

his wife and child. The latter is frightened at the effulgence of his father's helmet, who, laying aside the dazzling casque, takes the infant in his arms and invokes heavenly benedictions on his head. The warrior then restores him to Andromache, who smiles through her tears as she clasps her darling to her fragrant bosom. This is the *dakruoen gelasasa*—the moist smile which has irradiated the page of Homer for three thousand years, and which shines there in unclouded lustre to the present day. Pope's verse, bright and melodious as it is, images in but faint reflection the matchless beauty of the original—

> "He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
> Restored the pleasing burden to her arms;
> Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid
> Hushed to repose; and with a smile surveyed
> The troubled pleasure soon chastised by fear.
> She mingled with the smile a tender tear."

So much for a mother's smile. Not less beautiful is that of a sweetheart. "The smile of the woman you love," says Victor Hugo, with an eloquence all his own, "has a brightness which lights up the darkest night."

Woman's smile is generally as safe as the Bank of England; man's as safe as the Bank of Elegance. "There's daggers in men's smiles," says Shakspere,

with truth indubitable though with grammar somewhat equivocal. We all remember the gentleman, who "smiled and smiled in such a sort as if he mocked himself, and scorned his spirit that could be moved to smile at anything." The Duke of Gloucester, no straighter in mind than in body, declared in cold blood that he could smile and murder while he smiled; and Hamlet, some time Prince of Denmark, set it down in his 'tables' that "one may smile, and smile, and smile, and be a villain." The 'one' in question was his uncle, towards whom it must be confessed that the Prince aforesaid acted in a manner by no means worthy of an affectionate nephew. In Israel of yore both the laughing and the smiling were of the falsest, which was, perhaps, the reason why Solomon, the son of David, ventured on the assertion that "A fool lifteth up his voice in laughter, but a wise man doth scarce smile a little." The very reverse of wise assuredly is he of whom the poet sings in metaphor bitter but just—

> "His constant smiles his emptiness betray,
> As shallow streams run dimpling all the way."

In scoffing mood speaks the democrat Reybond of the smile Monarchic, "I cannot but admire that gift of smiling which God has granted to kings, and

which, sooth to say, is so necessary to them." Necessary it may have been, and may still be for ceremonial purposes, but in the grim days of absolute Monarchy it sometimes boded no good for the favourite, who little weeting of a change of fortune, paused not to mark "the narrow space betwixt a prison and a smile."

But this is the dark side of the question. Not to be too hard upon our own sex—if sex it deserves to be called—it may be admitted that the smile on many a male face—if face it merits to be styled—betokens a benevolent nature and an unclouded conscience. In the grim battle of life we have all—men and women alike—to come up smiling to time, and sad, indeed, it is to think how often the smile upon the lips mocks the hidden anguish in the heart.

"Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern,
Mask hearts where grief has little left to learn,
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,
In smiles that least befit who wear them most."

So wrote one beneath whose own external gaiety often lurked memories as sad as ever darkened human bosom.

SLANG.

To the reproach of vulgarity all slang is at first liable, but if a pithy idea underlie the grotesque saying the slang will live in right of that idea, the vulgarity notwithstanding. It would be no difficult matter to cite by the score expressions which originating in garrets have passed through the gilded saloons of fashion, found their way to learned lips, and become incorporated into everybody's language. Of course there are slang phrases and slang phrases —some wise, some silly, even as there are oysters and oysters—some natives, some 'settlers'; but besides the nonsensical or merely frivolous pieces of *argot*, there are others not a few in which you shall find philosophy hived "like honey i' the bag of the bee." All that saint, sage, sophist, ever writ of sacred, wise, and subtle is concentrated in the homely question, "What are the odds so long as you're happy?"

Ah! what indeed? We all know the witty reply, that the odds are a thousand to one it won't last; but that is neither here nor there nor anywhere else —a mere evasion. Philosophy is not to be laughed away in that cynic fashion like Spain's chivalry. The question, worthy to be written in letters of gold, remains indelible—What does it matter, what *can* it matter so that you are happy? Not a button.

Then again, there is the famous interrogatory, "Don't you wish you may get it?" How poignant is the irony lurking in these words! How keen the satire on the vanity of all human wishes! Perhaps, sweet reader, you will have the kindness to sing to any air you please the following song on the tragic theme—

DON'T YOU WISH YOU MAY GET IT.

Beautiful maid! You're in search of a lover
Such as the seraphs might like to discover—
Gentle and generous, good-looking, youthful,
Chivalrous, erudite, courteous, and truthful,
Who would think but of *you*, though your sex should all pet him,
Beautiful maid! Don't you wish you may get him?

Handsome young man! You're in search of a maiden
Every angelic enchantment arrayed in—
Lovely and well-dowered, silver-tongued, clever,
Rich in accomplishment, sweet-tempered ever,

Who would live but for *you*, though all men should beset her,
Handsome young man! Don't you wish you may get her?

Married and single, we all are pursuing
Triumphs that end in the victor's undoing,
Finishing never, but always beginning,
Running a race that is not worth the winning;
Evermore chasing with frantic endeavour
Phantoms of happiness, grasping them never,
Looking for peace where no man ever met it
On life's tempest-vext sea—Don't we wish we may get it?

Yes, to be sure. We are all free to wish if not all to possess. *Licet velle, non licet potiri.*

Shakspere's plays are rich in the popular phrases of his day which he has rescued from the oblivion commonly attendant upon the ephemeral existence of such sayings by transferring them to his imperishable page. "Fair weather after you," "'Tis but early days yet," "All this is 'long of you," "There is small choice in rotten apples," and "I know a trick worth two of that," were doubtless slang utterances of the Elizabethan age, which thanks to the Bird of Avon, have survived till the Victorian, and will doubtless endure as long as the English language. But of all the men and women who use these and many similar phrases, how few pause to think that in so speaking they are talking Shakspere. "All Lombard Street to a china orange" has still a

modern ring about it. A yet more eccentric wager, "My hat to a half-penny," is a sort of bet which one would not be surprised to find in a Byronic burlesque of the nineteenth century, yet it is a bit of slang as old as our great dramatist, and rests upon no inferior authority.

Talking of hats, it is curious to observe how from Shakspere's time to our own they have been pressed into the service of slang. The inquiry, formerly very popular, "Who's your hatter?" was a witless, impertinent demand for information upon a subject which in no way concerned the inquirer. A still more offensive interrogatory was once in great vogue, and unhappily has not even yet gone out, the progress of civilization notwithstanding. Why the wearer of a white hat should be called upon in the public street, or anywhere else for the matter of that, to answer such a question as, "Who stole the donkey?" is one of those mysteries at which the pride of human intellect stands abashed, hopelessly baffled by the problem. One day last year I was rushing out of town on the eve of a Bank Holiday, my practice ever at the approach of that objectionable festival, when I found my path suddenly barred by a drunken man, who insisted upon my giving him information about this asinine

felony. "Who stole the donkey?" he exclaimed in a voice of thunder. "Out of my way, you sot! How should I know?" I replied; "I see no donkey but you, and certainly I have no desire to steal you." I had forgotten all about the catch-phrase, and could not make out what the fellow meant. Arguing the point with him at the corner of Billiter Street, to the no small amusement of a group of blackguard boys, I should have been late for my train had not it been for the merciful intervention of a policeman, assuredly not of the 'H' division, who, pointing towards my head, said, "Your 'at, sir; your 'at."

There was a time when the people had their pet sayings, sometimes sapient, oftener senseless, which lasted for a season, to be succeeded by others not more witty, not more wise. But except in a few such cases as have been mentioned, which die hard, street-slang in the sense of catch-phrases has well-nigh vanished. The most memorable examples of it in our time had a sweet maternal import, and were comprised in the tender inquiries—"Does your mother know you're out?" and "Has your mother disposed of her mangle?" Plebeian scorn of consequential airs, assumed by persons whom you would like to purchase at your estimate of them and sell at

their own, has seldom found more rancorous expression than in the latter interrogatory. Fancy the effect of such a query addressed to a 'masher,' who though but a mushroom, would have it believed that he can trace his descent in 'sang azur' from Queen Boadicea! "Has your mother disposed of her mangle?"

Ah me! must I remember? I had rather not; but I suppose I must, for memory is an inexorable dun, and melodies, like murder, 'will out.' Not St. Augustine, nor Jacques Jean Rousseau, in their most penitential moods, ever made a confession more humiliating than that which the present writer now makes in sackcloth and ashes, when avowing that that awful question prompted him in his salad days, while indeed as yet a mere boy, to the following sally of—

MIDSUMMER MADNESS.

Believe me, your love is a blessing of prize,
As the richest by far I have won;
For I live and rejoice in the light of your eyes,
As a river exults in the sun.
O, I love you, as mariners dreaming of death
Love the Bow that foretelleth repose;
As the bee loves the eglantine's exquisite breath;
As the nightingale loveth the rose.

Yes, I love you, and should though to love you were sin,
As the blossoms of May love the dew;
And the stars love the brooks that they view themselves in;
As the sea loves the moon I love *you.*
On your lip will I feast, on your smile will I bask,
While my heart in your fetters you tangle,
But forgive me, Enchantress, for daring to ask,
Has your mother dis——

But there! Courage fails me to finish the sentence.

Reader, jewel, I throw myself on thy mercy. To thee alone do I confide the authorship of this sorrowful effusion. Betray me not! By the consonancy of our loves I charge thee not to divulge my secret. If thou does't—O, if thou does't—"a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings will tell the matter" to my enemy. And then, woe worth the day!—what will become of my little book?

AD PUELLAM CARISSIMAM.

VIRGINUM tu flos, Helene, mearum
Cui color nulli niteat secundus,
Lucidi cedunt oculis coruscis
Sidera cœli.

Labra mellitum superant Hymettum;
Et comæ suavi redolent odore;
Non fuit tantæ Cytherea formæ
Cum mare liquit.

Quam placens nobis fueris, venusta,
Quamque sis, testes, Helene, dei sint
Si mihi donent edere enitentem
Te, dea dulcis!

Hoc tamen, virgo, cupio doceri
An tibi mater, mulier severa,
Machinam lotas togulas parando
Vendidit auro?

A MISPRIZED FRIEND.

"WELL, sir," said I to my fellow-passenger in the Tenby train, "I am exceedingly sorry that it does not give you satisfaction; but I cannot help it. I can only say that it is the best I have to offer." "Bad is the best then," he testily replied; "a worse there could not be." "Odspettikins, sir!" I rejoined, resorting to Elizabethan expletives, as is my habit when grievously excited, "you must give me leave to say that there is no better within the four seas that encircle this island." "That is a matter of opinion; and I adhere to mine." "Zounds and Gadzooks, sir!" I exclaimed, "I must know more about it than you. It has been my confidential intimate, my fond familiar creature, for years past; whereas you have only known it, and that not from personal experience, but merely from observation, since we left Paddington this morning. I'll match it

against the world, sir!" "*That* you certainly may for badness." "Badness! Go to! 'Marry come up.' It is simply perfection in its own way! Good lack, sir! would you drive me mad with your slanders on my Beloved?" "No, certainly not," he made answer in tones less expressive of anger than of sorrow. "Far from me any such cruel desire—I would soothe, not exasperate. Though you are a stranger whom I have never seen before, may never see again, you are a more or less human being, and so within the zone of my sympathies, which embrace all humanity. Therefore I make bold to repeat that it is an out-and-out bad one. And mark my words! if you don't get rid of it, it will get rid of you. Good-day to you." So saying he stepped out of the train which had now drawn up at the Cardiff station.

When he was gone I was alone, for we had been the only occupants of the carriage all the way down.

It was about my COUGH that we had been talking. I am free to confess that I was cut to the quick by the disparaging manner in which he had spoken of it, for so far from deeming it a bad one, I have of late regarded it with proud affection as the very best in the country—in fact as the CHAMPION COUGH of England. If there be in this nation a louder and

more pertinacious one—one more instant in season and out of season, I can but affirm, as I do most solemnly, that I have never heard it.

No sooner had my travelling companion departed than I fell into a meditative mood; and my Cough, sweet pet, was the theme of my meditations. Mr. Wilkins Micawber was wont to cull comfort in his moments of despondency, from the reflection that no man is without a friend who has shaving-utensils. With equal truth, though without any *arrière pensée* on self-destruction, it may be averred that no man is without a friend who has a cough. Such is my happy destiny. Yet when I think of my Cough—and it occupies my attention not a little—I am fain to ask myself, have I treated it properly? I do not mean 'properly' from a medical point of view, for in that regard I have nothing to reproach myself with, because as I have tried on it everything under the sun and moon, I must have treated it properly at some time or another; no, but have I used it rightly in the sense of justice, of courtesy, nay, even of common gratitude? I am constrained to acknowledge that in all these respects I have been criminally remiss. I now know better, and seek to act accordingly; but for years I looked upon my Cough as an enemy, and either hated it intensely, or forgave

it "as a Christian," and we all know what *that* means. Meanwhile did it not act the part of a bosom-friend, sticking closer to me than a brother, a dun, or a mustard-plaster? Old comrades fell away from me as they saw the tide of my prosperity ebb; neighbours looked askance at me when my coat grew threadbare; the good withheld their smiles from me when Fortune frowned; the wicked ceased from troubling me when they found that nothing was to be got by it; even sweethearts have left me without giving notice or paying in advance (the way the last one—Olivia, I think, was her name—behaved to me was simply an outrage); but my Cough, my beautiful, my own, has ever been true and constant, nestling in my breast as near to my heart as it could creep. Neither poverty nor misfortune has chilled its ardour; on the contrary, I think that these accidents of which I have had my full proportion rather tend to bind my darling closer to me. For it is by no means a mere fair-weather friend, this Cough of mine. In the dismal dreary winter when the face of Nature being clouded with gloom and mud, one requires companionship until she washes and powders it and makes it fit to be seen and saluted—yea, in that woful, disconsolate season my Cough is more pointed and assiduous than ever in

its attentions to me. Of what other friend can so much be said?

Then again, how often have I misunderstood my Cough's cheerful habit of administering curtain lectures? Such things are clearly blessings in disguise. Suffering piteously from insomnia as I do, it would be indescribably painful and irksome to me to lie awake and have nothing to do during the dark, lonesome hours of the live-long night; but with the vigorous exercise my Cough provides, I manage to kill time, and almost myself as well, without any fear on my part that should I quite succeed in the latter enterprise, a coroner's jury will bring in a verdict of *felo de se*. There is another obligation I owe to my Cough. It has certainly prolonged my life. I do not mean to say that this is an unmixed blessing either to myself or anybody else; but that is not my Cough's fault. It has acted for the best in this way. It has made me take care of myself. But for it I might have followed wild rackety courses, with the usual consequences to my heart, my head—what there is of it—my liver, and everything that is mine. Or perhaps I might have got knocked upon that head aforesaid by the prowlers of the night, for sake of the twopence-halfpenny I occasionally have about me in case of contingencies. Other dangers

which will suggest themselves to the observant mind I might have encountered, but all these have I been spared by that faithful custodian, my Cough, who has kept me at home o' nights. And what return have I made to my preserver—my guide, philosopher, and friend? Hated it, reviled it, assaulted it with every abomination of the pharmacopœia, poured upon it the phials of my wrath, and of the chemists' shop as well! But I will do so no longer. I see the error of my way, and henceforth will treat my Cough with all the consideration its long and devoted service merits. I will give it rum and milk of a morning, champagne and cream of an evening, filling up the intervals with things of the "lucent syrups tinct cum cinnamon" order, toothsome cates and delectable dainties, and any of my readers desiring to help in the good work, may do so by contributions addressed to my publisher. "Pour on, I will endure!" But let no one dare to propose any more nauseous drugs for my Cough. I will none of them.

I have now turned over a new leaf—a mustard-leaf—with my Cough, and hope to make up for past unkindness by more gracious conduct in the future. That I am ready to fight my Cough's battle will, I trust, be apparent from the pugnacious dialogue with which this essay opened. Yet I feel that my

misprized friend has still further claim upon my penitence. Poetic reparation is also due, and I beg leave to offer it in the following—

ODE TO MY COUGH.

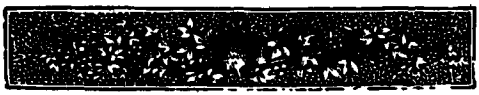
My Cough! No other comrade I
Have found so leal and true;
The fond possessive pronoun 'My'
Is well applied to *you*.
For mine indeed you are, my Cough,
And I am yours alone;
The one can't cast the other off,
My beautiful, my own!

Sweet Cough! Dear bedfellow of mine,
Still faithful to my bed;
When sleep with me will not recline,
I find *you* there instead.
When gay companions me forsake,
And all my friends are flown,
The midnight echoes you can wake,
My beautiful, my own!

My Cough! Resplendent is your fame,
As any cough's can be;
What to the candle is the flame,
Sweet pet, you are to me.
My earnings—all that I was worth—
To pay my debts have gone;
My Cough's the only thing on earth
That I can call my own.

My Cough! Oh, neither fraud nor force,
Shall separate us two;
When you have run your woful course,
I'll disappear with you.
My friends will say, "That fellow's off,
For him 'twere vain to moan;
He's gone, and with himself his Cough,
His beautiful, his own!"

There! I am not a vain man, yet I venture to think that neither Lord Tennyson nor Dr. Westland Marston, nor yet Mr. Robert Browning (*Beatus qui intelligit!*) will hesitate to admit that he never wrote such a poem as that.



AD TUSSIM MEAM DILECTAM.

TUSSIS oh salve! socia oh fidelis
Pectori sævum dominata nostro
Namque consortem potiorem nullo
Tempore novi.

Cum negat sese mihi Fors amica
Sordidi turpes fugiunt amici;
Nec dolor terret neque te, Voluptas
Oh mea, sordes.

Quo fuges Eurum dominum minacem
Voce tu latras vehementer acri
Semper infandum crepitans acerba
Ore canino.

Heu, mari frustra, mea Tussis, hostem
Improbo explodis truculentiorem;
Sic et illatrans Hecube furenti
Sæviit ore.

Suaviter tecum coluisse possim
Semper, oh Tussis, nisi jam propinquat
Hora Parcarum, comitante te me
Dulcis amica

Cum mihi fatum est adiisse Avernum.
Qui fragor tundet veterem CHARONTA!
CERBERUM crebro strepitu movebis,
Barbara, surdum!

THE LOST ENCHANTMENT.

It would seem that every step taken on the road of knowledge and scientific advancement must be at the cost of treading down some cherished and perfectly innocuous figment of our early days, around which we may have built up a whole town of poetic fancies and romantic associations. Nothing in these modern days of realism and stern investigation has had a more crushing effect upon such visions of our youth than "the annihilation of distance." Now consider, my friends and friendesses, how impossible it is to have the same feeling and reverence for certain places of historic interest that we had only a few years ago. Let us take Egypt for instance. Why, in my young days those solemn figures in the British Museum wore a grand as well as an awful sight, giving us an idea, though in a vague and shadowy manner, of a far-off land, the history of

which might be traced back till lost in a cloud of mystery! "The Pyramises were goodly things," and, in fact, everything connected with Egypt was solemn, vast, Sphynx-like, enigmatical. But now, thanks to the annihilation of distance, all is changed as if by magic. What care I for Egypt, its monuments, its Pharaohs, or its mummies! Begone the whole pack of you, and take your crocodiles and sacred beetles and all the remainder of your trumpery with you, miserable old scamps that you are, to have imposed upon us so long! We know all about you, Messrs. Rameses and Amenoph, Madame Cleopatra and the rest. Your houses are so many hours' distance from Charing Cross or London Bridge, I can send a telegram to where you were, 'riz,' and bully you and all your relatives in the daily papers. I can buy a return-ticket in Fleet street and be delivered on the steps of your doors with as much punctuality, perhaps more, than if I were going to dine with a friend at Brighton. I was in the British Museum last week, and these were the irreverent thoughts that passed through my mind; and only a very little stretch of imagination was necessary to make it appear that the Egyptian sculptures were themselves sensible of the change that had come over our ideas with regard to them. I fancied that I could detect

a furtive snigger on the face of that black solemn-looking old party with the cat's head, as if he were chuckling to himself to think how long he had been keeping up his little game before he had been found out. What is Egypt now? Nothing more than a continuation of Cheapside, or an advertising station. Every place has been so thoroughly 'done' that it has lost all freshness and originality. We are now promised a railway up to the very crater of Vesuvius, and no doubt accommodation will be provided for those who may wish to descend into the abyss, after the fashion of the old diving-bell which proved so attractive some years ago. By the way, this would afford quite a new field for the 'modistes'; as it has become absolutely necessary to dress half a dozen times a day to suit the occupation or amusement in hand. Ladies wishing to dive into Hades would, of course, be habited in an elegant and becoming *costume d'enfer*. Then what glorious dinners could be provided on the spot! An enterprising *cuisinier* could turn the resources of Vesuvius into a mine of wealth, regarding the volcano in the useful light of a vast cooking-stove. Depend upon it, the speculation would pay well, and "to fry beefsteaks at a volcano" would be no longer a mere figure of speech, but a glorious reality. As for poor Switzerland, it

has become so mobbed that it is nearly as bad as Ramsgate Sands on an excursion day: and then it is so dreadfully near home that one can almost hear the postman's knock at one's own door. Suppose I have a fine morning to see the sun rise on the Bernese Oberland, how do I know that while I am standing there in shivering expectation, I may not receive a telegram to say that my investment in the Muggle-drubbery Diamond Mines has turned out a fiasco? I tell you that it is all a mistake. I may be looking at the Alps, but the "enchantment of distance" is gone. I am bored to death with newspapers; and look where I may, advertisements stare me in the face requiring me to buy pickles, bicycles, teeth, blacking, wedding-cakes, cradles, and that most odious of all modern pests, thunder and lightning soap. Call you that "going out of town," my friends?

Not only has the annihilation of distance changed our feelings in regard to places, but in some cases it has caused whole nations to disappear altogether. Now, if any one should be bold enough to deny this assertion, let me ask him or her to tell me what has become of Turkey and the Turks? If I ask any one of my acquaintances to show me a Turk, he will point out to me a spruce-looking gentleman of dark complexion wearing a chimney-pot hat and habited

in the fashionable attire of a west-end tailor. Well may I exclaim in the words of the old song—

> "I've seen a chap at 'Bartlemy Fair
> More like a Turk than that chap there."

He a Turk, indeed! No, my friend, I flatter myself that I know what a Turk is, or, at all events, should be. From my earliest youth Turks have been my delight and at the same time my terror. I have read *Blue Beard* and *Oberon*, and have seen pictures of Turks from the most undoubted authority, and it is not likely that a number of grave historians and artists would combine to mislead the youthful mind upon so important a point. A Turk is a fierce warrior, with a tremendous moustache curling up to his ears and a long beard. He waves over his head a scimitar which is in form a complete semicircle, and broader at the point, which is scolloped off, than at the hilt. His slippers have points curling like ram's horns, an enormous turban covers his head, and in the centre of this turban glitters the awful crescent. His jacket is laden with gold and precious stones, and his vest and waist-belt are studded with poniards and richly-ornamented pistols. He is always stamping and plucking his beard, and his favourite amusements are those of witnessing executions with the bow-strings or stitching his wives up in sacks and

throwing them into the Bosphorus. That is a Turk if you like. Then, again, it is well known that in ordinary conversation he would always address a Christian as "dog of a Frank," but as for that creature you have just pointed out to me, if I were to speak to him he would most likely raise his hat and reply to me in the politest possible French. And you would have me believe that he is a Turk! Go to! odsbodikins! and marry-come-up! Do you take me for a fool? Well perhaps; but there are degrees of folly, "Stultus sum non fatuus." The fact of the case is that the Turk of my youth, that terrible and interesting individual, has disappeared, finding it no longer possible to exist within the shriek of the railway-whistle, and the glare of the gas-lamps.

I came across an old book the other day called *A Prospect of the Most Famous Part of the World*, by John Speed. It is dated 1646. Honest John Speed, what an astounding condition of things as existing at that date does this volume of thine reveal! The enchantment, or at all events the mystery, of distance in those days allowed the imagination to run riot in every kind of wild speculation. Howling wildernesses swarming with unheard-of beasts, dragons and serpents, each year producing a 'new monster,' filled up all the spaces that were not immediately

within the knowledge of traders, and the few others who travelled. It is only just, however, to say that some of these tales were not implicitly believed even by Speed himself, for after relating some astounding crammer, such as that of mice growing up out of the ground in certain places by reason of the heat of the sun, he slily adds, "Believe this if ye list." His account of the British Islands is scarcely less wonderful than his description of foreign countries. Cumberland and Westmoreland were as difficult of access in Speed's time as Africa is now. It will, however, be satisfactory to Londoners to hear that he compares Middlesex and the valley of the Thames to Paradise. As for the rest of the country, moving mountains, tempestuous lakes in a dead calm, unfathomable gulfs, roaring cataracts and inaccessible cliffs meet you at every turn. Wales was a land of wonders, of which Merioneth and Caernarvonshire came in for the largest share of notice. Mountains crusted over perpetually with ice and snow over which no traveller, however lightly appointed, could ever pass, were the least of these. Still a shade of incredulity is manifested now and then by our author. For instance, after giving an account of a marvellous floating island, he says, "I think the reader would rather believe this than go

and see if it be so or no." But there were wags in those days as now, ever ready to impose strange tales upon travellers, and poor old Speed fell completely into their traps at last. Some arrant knaves at Brecknock thus cajoled him—but I shall let him tell his story in his own words:—"There is a hill three miles from Brecknock of such height and operation as is incredible, and, in my perambulations remaining in Brecknock to visit the town, no less than eight of the aldermen who had been bailiffs of the town came to visit me, when they reported, upon their credit and trials, that they had from the summit of that hill often cast from them their hats, cloaks, and staves, which however would *never fall*, neither would anything fall from that cliff so cast." What an amazing and portentous spectacle it must have been to see a hill surrounded by a halo composed of the hats, cloaks, and sticks, and probably the wigs, of eight aldermen, perpetually whirling round its summit! Poor John Speed! These rascals had the impudence to ask him to a "courteous and friendly entertainment" at his departure. I wonder how they looked at one another after he was gone?

Turning from the material to the moral aspect of the question, the disenchantment attending upon attainment, or proximity, is equally remarkable.

We have most of us known the man who was some day going to be supremely happy when in possession of something that at that time was to him quite unattainable, and we have seen the same man, after he had succeeded in getting what he wanted, settling down for the remainder of his life into a condition either of pompous gloom or fretful restlessness. His wife and he, who, perhaps, never quarrelled before, now never agree in anything except grumbling at the servants; his children lose the refinement of manner and consideration for others which they formerly had, and presuming on their increased prosperity become coarse and overbearing to their parents and to all about them; and in a thousand ways the realization of the hopes of years proves to be the very reverse of what imagination had pictured that it would be. So with places. How few fulfil the expectation raised by anticipation of the visit to them! There is always a something wanting in reality that the enchantment of distance had supplied. When children existed, before their places were supplied by the present race of sharp little old men and women, childish expectation was a thing delightful to behold. What excitement and ecstasy at the promise of going to a pantomime or opening a new 'picture-book'! A picture-book in those days

was a rare and wonderful treat, especially if the pictures were coloured. The eyes of children had not then been sated by continually feasting on the gorgeous productions of the modern colour-printer. When I see these magnificent volumes being rudely torn and trampled on by the *blasé* infancy of the day, I try to imagine what we should have thought in our young days of such treasures. Why, if it had been possible then to obtain such books (which it was not), they would have been put under lock and key, and only shown to us on holidays under a glass case like the rare MSS. in the British Museum! I am not going to disparage the artistic splendours of children's books of the present age, but *Jack and the Beanstalk* is not *my* Jack. I care not a straw for his elegant mediæval costume. And then *Puss in Boots* too. Why have those boots been altered? Let him, I say, have the regular top-boots of the old stage coachman. It may be an anachronism; so much the better, although I am not quite sure that the exact date when Puss and the Lord Marquis of Carabbas existed has ever been satisfactorily defined; but your modern infant has discounted all his amusements beforehand, and everything in his eyes has become flat, stale, and unprofitable. If you were to ask one of these 'used up' children anything about Vesuvius

he would reply like Sir Charles Coldstream, "Oh, big hill; hole in the top; nothing in it." While upon the subject of illustrated literature I cannot help remarking that we have as far as that matter is concerned completely anticipated our Christmas. Formerly our Christmas books and papers used to be brought out *at* Christmas, but now we get them early in October, and long before the holiday arrives we have quite forgotten all about them; but perhaps the weather may have something to do with this. As the seasons change we shall change the time of publishing our Yule-tide literature, and the pictures of smoking hot plum-puddings decorated with holly would be quite comforting amid the frosts and snow-storms of Midsummer. A friend, who is looking over me, suggests that a cabman would be able to give me a few good ideas on the subject of the "Enchantment of Distance," as gentlemen of his persuasion ever incline to throw a pleasing mystery over the number of miles that may be supposed to extend in a direct line, say, from the Circus in Piccadilly to the corner of Bond Street; but this is levity, and we must not allow the subject we have chosen to be desecrated in any such way. Let us rather consider it as we have hitherto done; but regard it from whatever point of view we may, we

must arrive at the same conclusion, and that is, that with the annihilation of distance comes a certain degree of disappointment. Distance once lent enchantment to the view; but distance itself has vanished, and with it its enchantment. Wordsworth in his poem of the 'Star Gazers' gives us the very gist of the matter when he describes the change that came over the people who had been looking through the telescope—

"Whatever be the cause 'tis sure that they who pry and pore,
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than before;
One after one they take their turn; nor have I one espied
That doth not slackly go away as if dissatisfied."

THE PEST OF GOOD ADVICE.

NOTHING is more hurtful to a man's happiness than the injudicious attempts of his fellow-creatures to promote it. It is in the proffer of good advice to which, however well meant, he has an invincible repugnance that these efforts often take their most objectionable form, for no one wants to be well advised. Indeed two things in this world are wonderful beyond description—the inexhaustible capacity of some people to offer good advice and the inexorable determination of other people not to take it. That one-half of the human family should be thus seized with an irrepressible desire to force upon the acceptance of the other half an article which they despise, not to say detest, is a mystery past finding out. Good advice is not a bit like the sweet south that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing and giving odour: for, all it steals is our patience, and all it gives is offence. The best thing about it is that it has 'a dying fall.'

The quality of good advice is not strained. It falleth like the gentle rain from heaven upon the paving-stones beneath, and with much the same effect. It blesseth him that gives—at all events he thinks it does; and it would doubtless be equally beneficial to him that takes, if anybody ever did take it; but nobody ever did nor ever will. It has been said before now that there are two egregious fools—the man who gives good advice, and the man who will not follow it. With such fools the world swarms.

Not less injurious to the dignity of mankind generally than to that of the individuals themselves is the indomitable pertinacity of discredited advisers in continuing to offer a gift which is systematically rejected. The honour of humanity is aggrieved by the spectacle of snubs so patiently endured, so wantonly invited. One might imagine that a sense of self-respect if no other consideration would deter a man from persisting in the tender of that which is regarded a nuisance; but no such argument prevails with your wise counsellor. 'Small thanks' is proverbially the market-price of good advice, and with that humble reward he is well content. "Exoneravit animam suam." In the prospect of being able to say "I told you so," on some future day he finds sufficient consolation for present rebuffs. That

Cassandra felt exquisite delight in witnessing the destruction of Troy, an event which she had unavailingly predicted and long endeavoured by sapient counsels to avert may now be affirmed with all that unfaltering confidence which gives to the utterances of ignorance so remarkable an advantage over those of wisdom.

The old deride the idea of receiving advice from the young who are as green of judgment as of years; the young deem the old disqualified to give advice by reason of their greater age and more varied experience. The unsuccessful who have missed their own way in life find a weird ironical joy in pointing out the right path to the successful, who of course laugh at them for their trouble; and so the game of cross-purposes goes on to the no small amusement of the lower animals—cows, horses, dogs, monkeys, and the rest—who unlike their betters neither give nor seek advice of any kind.

Social philosophers have long been at their wit's end to understand why there are so many unhappy marriages; yet the cause is plain enough. It is that man and wife are perpetually offering one another good advice which neither ever takes. To take it were to admit the superior wisdom of the offerer, and that were an admission fatal to the fine theory

of equality which, as we know, is the very basis of matrimony. Burns weeps to think "how many counsels sweet, how many lengthened sage advices, the husband frae the wife despises." It might equally have moved his sorrow to consider how inflexibly the wife resists the counsels of the husband, the greatness of whose mind she is unwilling to admit, although after having given her a bit of it every day of their married lives he has still as much left as ever.

Good advice, always unwelcome, is never more so than when it appears in the shape of those exhortations which the married deem it "stuff of the conscience" to address to the single in the hope of inducing them to enter the holy state of wedlock. This is a matter on which the present writer is qualified to speak with all the anguish of personal experience, few men having suffered more persecution of this cruel kind than has fallen to his lot. "Wae's me, wae's me!" as the late Mr. Carlyle was wont to exclaim when maddened out of his philosophy by the cackling of a couple of hens,—"demon fowls" as he rejoiced to call them—in his neighbour's garden. In vain do I plead my numerous disqualifications for matrimony—the colour of my hair, my ugliness, my stupidity, the impossibility of my being able to make myself attractive to any lady, the equal impossibility

of my finding a lady who would consent to be bothered with me at any price, my hopeless incapacity for the first duty of a husband—obedience, and a hundred other arguments not less cogent. My wedded friends, more especially the elderly gentlewomen of my acquaintance, refuse to accept any one of these excuses. Being a bachelor I must be miserable, and being miserable it is their duty as Christians to take me out of my misery by getting me married whether I like it or not. "Bless my heart, sir," said to me the other day the most bewitching of her sex—a comely matron, who would have been fifty had she been a man, but who being a lady is only thirty—"bless my heart, sir, can it be that you are insensible to the most delightful of all wants, 'ce besoin enchanteur, le besoin d'être deux,' the enchanting desire to be *two*." "Indeed, madam," I replied, "it grieves me to confess that I have no such ambition. On the contrary, so very inconvenient have I found it to be even *one*, that it stands to reason that if I were *two* I should be a double nuisance both to myself and my friends. Moreover, I fail to perceive how the process of self-duplication, even supposing it to be as desirable as in my sad case it is the reverse, is to be effected through matrimony. I have always understood that man and wife are *one*, and that that one

is the wife all the world over. This being so, instead of being doubled I should be reduced to a nonentity by marriage. In fact I should be nobody at all. I am gratefully sensible of your kindness, my dear madam, and thank you heartily, but I was born a bachelor; such was Nature's eccentric ordinance in my behalf; and a bachelor I should like to remain till the close of the chapter." My fair friend heaved a deep sigh and looking sorrowfully, O, how sorrowfully, at me, tapped her forehead with the forefinger of her right hand, as much as to say that she took me to be out of my mind—and it is like enough that she was not far wrong.

There are two rules which men and women of sense will not fail to bear in mind. Never volunteer advice, and should it be solicited take care that it shall fall in with the pre-conceived wishes and intentions of the persons seeking counsel. And indeed it were to be wished that such people would indicate beforehand what manner of utterances they would desire to issue from the oracle of friendship, as was the practice of Tam Glen's sweetheart before consulting her friend Trittie—

"Come, counsel, dear Trittie; don't tarry,
I'll gie ye my bonny black hen,
If you will advise me to marry
The lad I love dearly—Tam Glen."

THE FOSSILS AT CHARING CROSS.

WONDERFUL as are the objects to be seen on the face of the earth, those that still lurk beneath its surface are probably still more astonishing. If it were possible to knock down London at a blow, and to plough up the site on which it now stands, what a museum of curiosities would be brought to light! The very idea of it "dizzies the arithmetic of thought," as WILLIAM phrases it. Certain 'navvies' engaged in digging the foundations for Messrs. Drummond's new banking-house, shovelled up the fossil remains not alone of such wild beasts of the forest as are still familiarly obnoxious to travellers, but also of colossal brutes who have been extinct for ages past, and whose very names, if they ever had any, it is now impossible to ascertain. To the truly philosophic mind such as thine, dear reader, what a field of curious reflection and awful speculation does this discovery open! It may not be new, but it is

true to say that Charing Cross is the very heart's-core of this million-peopled city. There it is that native citizens swarm in multitudinous masses, and the denizens of all nations hold their rendezvous. How marvellous—how staggering is the thought that where in proof of our consummate civilization fountains now squirt, making water ridiculous—where statues that might frighten children and make horses bolt now scowl at the passers-by—where light resplendent flashes through the streets—where the word 'Bank!' is incessantly uttered for the delight of the impecunious, and where the bells of St. Martin peal in jubilant concert for the comfort of the sick —ay, on that very spot wolves and tigers, lions and leopards, and creatures yet more dreadful, once bounded from their lairs and rent the air with their terrific roars! Those were the days of pre-historic man, when that individual, however disreputable, nevertheless cut a less preposterous figure than does his trowsered and chimney-potted descendant—the primæval days when "wild in woods the noble savage ran."

Lord Byron speculates, and not perhaps fantastically, upon the coming of a time when thrones, and those who sat upon them, shall have alike vanished past recall, and when the future inhabitants of this

chameleon-like planet will, as when gazing on the mammoth's bones, "wonder what old world such sights could see." Pursuing that vein of curious conjecture, we are insensibly lured into prospective contemplation of an age possibly not very remote, when the doom of the extinct mammalia will overtake the lords and ladies of creation, and when men and women—not alone those of the present generation, but the whole human race—shall have disappeared, to return no more. Who will dare to deny that Charing Cross may one day be inhabited by beings of a superhuman type, who will turn up their noses at us, even as we, with unfilial disdain, turn up ours at the monkeys in the Zoological Gardens? We are now verging upon the realms of poetry, so let us burst into melody with

A SONG OF THE FUTURE.

WHERE toss Trafalgar's fountains dun
Their shabby bubbles in the sun,
  Once prowled, with hideous features,
Horrific monsters, fell of birth,
Whose bounds portentous shook the earth—
  Objectionable creatures!

By 'Navvies'' spades audacious stirred,
Their mighty frames were disinterred,
  A Spectacle tremendous.

With looks of consternation blank
The clerks in Mr. Drummond's bank
  Surveyed the bones stupendous.

Who knows but from that very place
Will one day pass our luckless race
  By judgments which befit us;
And nobler lords of Charing Cross
Emerging from our worthless dross,
  As we from apes, will twit us?

"Here roamed," they'll say, with haughty scorn,
"The foolish race of woman born;
  And we are well without them.
They had their little feverish day,
Then vanished from the world away;
  That's all we know about them."

THE SCIENCE OF LUCK.

It was said of old by the sages of Attica, that the gods themselves cannot help the man who neglects his opportunities. This may be so, and if so, the more is the pity; but the maxim suggests a wish that before breaking with us as dunces, unobservant of our happy chances, the authorities of Olympus would be pleased to enlighten us on the subject of those occasions. How are we to know an opportunity when we see it?—that is the question. It is not given to us to forecast events, or to predict to what issues, whether of joy or sorrow, any particular incident of our lives may ultimately lead. *That* is written in the stars: and Astrology is a fond delusion —a vain conceit; the Philosopher's stone was no vainer.

Astrology apart, a practical knowledge of omens, happy and unhappy, and nice skill in the art of

turning the former to good account and of rejecting the latter, are essential to the recognition and proper development of our opportunities. So small a matter as the striking of the foot against the threshold in first going abroad, was by the ancients reputed an accident of evil augury, and was one of the pretexts used by Tibullus in order to delay his departure from his well-beloved Delia—

> "O quoties ingressus iter mihi tristia dixi
> Offensum in porta signa dedisse pedem!"

Strange it is that it should ever have been deemed a thing of evil omen for a man on board ship to shave in fair weather; yet that it was so accounted by the Romans seems clear enough from a passage in the writings of that matchless Arbiter of all the Elegancies, Titus Petronius. Who but a person versed in the mystic lore of omens could suppose that his future career would be ruined by so trivial an affair as a trip at starting? or that the proper time for shaving at sea is in a gale of wind? How is a man to know his opportunities when he sees them?—that I repeat is the question of questions. Neptune, supreme in his own "barren and untillable" ocean, as Homer styles it, somewhat disrespectfully, has nothing to do with the tide in the affairs of man; nor is it possible to calculate, as in the matter of

high water at London Bridge, when the sea of human destiny will be at the flood.

> "Fortune a goddess is to fools alone,
> The wise are always masters of their own."

So Juvenal says; but what should he know about it? Not Solomon himself, the wisest of the sons of Adam, was master of his fortune. How should he have been so? Man is often the sport of circumstance; more frequently still is he the sport of woman; and in what direction each or both may design to waft him, he has no more notion than that most ignorant of all nonentities, the child unborn.

"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. His behaviour should be like his apparel, not too strait, but free for exercise." Thus wrote Bacon; but, with all deference for the Lord of Verulam, be it spoken, there is room to doubt the veracity of so astonishing a proposition. Opportunities are not of our own creation. They come to us unbidden; they are not to be made by human hands like pancakes. The sartorial metaphor is in this age most unfortunate. Hard and unaccommodating indeed must that man's behaviour be which is no freer than his apparel, as any one who has ever worn the cylinders called 'trousers' and the chimney-pot called a 'hat' will admit to his sorrow.

Locke was of the two the better philosopher when he frankly affirmed that "He who sometimes lights on truth is in the right but by chance; and I know not whether the luckiness of the accident will excuse the irregularity of the proceeding." We build castles in the air; we rear palaces of frost-work confronting the sun; we plot, and plan, and devise crafty schemes to win the favour of Fortune; but Fortune has her own favourites, and if we are not *ab initio* of that lucky number, vain is our toil, hopeless our enterprise. To the arrogance of human intellect it is somewhat humiliating to have to admit what every one's personal experience but too surely attests —the truth of the French couplet—

"Bien souvent le hasard, contre toute espérance,
Nous conduit mieux cent fois que notre prévoyance."

Let preachers shake their heads and moralists knit their brows as they may, there is no getting away from the thought that there must be something in luck after all. Else how are we to account for the failure of so many gifted men and the success of so many duffers? Who is there that has not found in the circle of his acquaintance, some man of vacuous face and mind as empty as a drum on whom the gods, none the less, delight to lavish their choicest

gifts? Of such a man it may safely be averred that he had not a second idea, seeing that he never had a first. He is not half a bad fellow; on the contrary, he is altogether so. His learning is imperceptible; you might put all his wit in your eye and see none the worse for it; yet good luck follows this Booby like his shadow in everything that he either does or leaves undone. His are the shares that go up, no matter whose may fall, on the Stock Exchange. He it is who holds all the trumps and picture-cards at whist, and rarely fails to draw the winning horse at every sweepstake. He has usually a fine estate which he seldom visits, and better still, a beautiful wife who loves him to adoration and for whom he cares little. Merit he has none; to do him justice, he lays no claim to any; yet everything prospers with him.

On the other hand, we have all known and know men, not a few, who though rich in every fine quality of heart and mind, and keenly industrious, not only fail to win money and renown, but even find it no easy matter to acquire a modest competency. Honest they are as the sun; good fellows in the best sense of the word; gentlemen to the core, and ever ready to help a neighbour; yet nothing goes right with them. Failure and dis-

appointment dog their steps through life; and friendship passes them like a ship at sea. They are swift, yet the race is not to them; strong, yet the battle goes against them. If merit had anything to do with success, these men, the *élite* of humanity, would be clothed in purple and fine linen, and riding in their carriages. As it is, their coats are threadbare; they can hardly afford the luxury of a twopenny omnibus; and the only quadruped of whom they have personal knowledge is the Wolf—Hunger, whom to drive from their doors is the daily business of their lives. This is a most unsatisfactory state of things.

Certain it is that before passing adverse judgment on men who have failed—and they, be it remembered, are the majority of mankind—we should in fairness inquire what their opportunities have been—whether, in fact, they ever had any, and whether, assuming that they had, they were also provided with the means of ascertaining that the opportunities were genuine, and not mere mirages in the desert of adversity.

Then, again, if Luck is really an active element of human destiny—and that it is who can doubt?—the question arises whether it be not possible to reduce that element to a scientific system. There are, to be

sure, two sorts of luck—the good and the bad—and sometimes it happens that both are curiously interwoven in the tissue of our careers. So it was with Spenser's Fairy Queen—

> "Glad of such luck, the luckless lucky maid,
> A long time with that savage people staid,
> To gather breath in many miseries."

But if we would 'gather breath' with any comfort in our miseries we should seek to bring luck of all kinds within the limits of scholastic treatment, so that we may know what we are about. In a word, there ought to be at every university and school a Professor of Luck, whose business it should be to interpret omens, to prevent us from getting out of bed on the wrong side, to verse us in the mysteries of happy and unhappy accidents, to keep us free from pins and cross-eyed persons on our pathway, and above all, to indicate the precise moment when the tide of fortune is at its flood, so that we may take our header at the proper minute. Until this is done, Success will be but a phantom, and Happiness no better than a dream, for the great mass of the human race.

JULY MOUNTAINEERING IN LONDON.

ANCIENT mythology personified July as a remarkably nice young man, in a jacket of light yellow. His comely face was sunburnt, not freckled; and his head was adorned with a garland of centaury and thyme. On his shoulder he bore a scythe; at his girdle, as at that of the immortal Mr. Gilpin, hung an earthenware bottle; and by his side crouched a lion. He—not the lion, but the young man—was in the act of eating cherries; as pleasant an occupation as any, so that you have stolen the cherries, not paid for them, forbidden fruit being ever the sweeter. Spenser's description is bolder and more picturesque—

"Then came hot July, boiling like to fire,
That all his garments he had cast away—
Upon a lion raging yet with ire
He boldly rode, and made him to obey:
Behind his back a scythe, and by his side,
Under his belt he bore a sickle circling wide."

Thus accoutred, he would be an object of general admiration in Rotten Row until the unwelcome arrival of the police.

"In this golden month," writes one who with the soundest judgment combined the sweetest fancy, "we pine to get away to some place where we can hear the murmur of the sea, or what is nearest that delightful noise, the rustle of the summer leaves. We long to lie down beneath the low-bending and high overhanging branches beside the stream that runs dark and bright through shade and sunshine, and watch the blue dragon-flies sport above the bluer forget-me-nots, that nod their tufted heads to every breeze which ripples the water. What dreams have we dreamed, and what visions have we seen, lying idly with half-shut eyes in some 'greenwood shaw,' sheltering from July's noonday sun, while we seemed to hear airy tongues that syllable men's names in the husky whispering of the leaves! Golden forms have seemed to spring up in the sunlighted stems of the trees, whose high heads were buried among the lofty foliage through which were seen openings to the sky. The deep-dyed pheasant shooting over the underwood with streaming plumage, became a fair maiden in our eyes; and the skulking fox noiselessly threading the brake, the grim enchanter from whom she was escaping."

Of kindred beauty are the meditations of an old writer who has been elbowed out of fame by the crowd of more pretentious not more meritorious authors. "The charm of a July morning is in the upland and the extensive view; they who have never beheld the rising sun from a mountain-top, know not how fair the world is." And how pretty and original is this conceit! "Early though it be there is a sentinel upon the heath; a shrill whistle comes sharp and clear upon the morning breeze, which makes all the echoes of the west answer. But be not alarmed. There is no danger: no guerilla, not even a solitary robber upon the British highlands; and the eagle and the raven are yet on the rocks, and reynard just leaving his den in the coppice below. That whistle is his *réveille*, to warn those birds that nestle among the grass in the heath that the enemy is coming abroad. It is the note of the plover."

One night of an effulgent day last July I lay, restless, comfortless, distraught with many cares, upon my lonely bed in my suburban 'diggings.' 'Diggings' I call my dwelling, according to the prevalent slang, though sooth to say I fail to perceive the fittingness of the term, seeing that my residence is a sky-parlour with nothing but a slate a quarter of an inch thick between me and the other fellow—him in the moon

overhead. But let that pass as all things must! The invisible Spirit of Chloral had failed to bring Sleep in her train. I had not closed either eye the whole night long. Over-against my lodgings is an old church with the noisiest of clocks in its ivy-clad tower. "Ah! this is weary work," thought I, "listening to that monstrous machine as it booms the death-knell of the lazy hours all over a parish where every one is asleep but I. Let me see what day of the month it is." I got up, and consulting the almanack, found that it was the twelfth. "The twelfth of July!" I exclaimed, "why, this is the birthday of the lamented Julius Cæsar!" The idea overwhelmed me for a while, for I am nothing if not a hero-worshipper. When I had recovered composure, pulled my component parts together, tubbed, and put on my clothes, I seriously considered how best to do honour to so glorious an anniversary. At first I thought of sounding the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea; but not having a timbrel handy, and there being no body of water, except the New River, within easy reach of me to represent the Egyptian Ocean, I abandoned the scheme as impracticable. A hundred different projects passed through my bewildered imagination; but at last I decided on mountaineering. "I will go up something," said I to that singular person, myself.

"I will ascend a mountain. Thus and thus only can I pay a fitting tribute of homage to the memory of him whose towering genius still rises like a mountain above the sphere of time."

So saying, I seized my umbrella, and sallied forth in search of a mountain to climb. After miles of dusty travel I found myself at the base of one just as Day, that unconscionable bankrupt, was again 'breaking.' The only sentinel on guard was a proud young policeman who evidently so far flattered me as to mistake me for a burglar. Would I were so honest a man! I asked Robert the time. He drew forth a pewter watch. It was 4.46 a.m. to the minute. Shouting 'Excelsior' in doubtful Latin, I braced my nerves to the giddy ascent. Umbrella in hand I scaled the fastnesses of Primrose Hill (where primroses there are none) and soon stood in lonely sublimity upon the summit of that magnificent eminence.

"Visions of glory, spare my aching eyes!" How shall I describe the sights I saw, the sounds I heard? Chalk Farm, serenely oblivious of its murderous memories, was sleeping in balmy quietude. Camden Town was slumbering placidly under the guardianship of its tutelary goddess—Mother Red Cap. From a forest of chimney-pots, lovely to behold, the "glorious sun uprist." Alpine sensations stole over

me. "This, this," I exclaimed with rapture, "is the proud privilege of those who are free of mountain solitudes. O, who would not be a mountaineer!"

The sparrows were chirping upon Shakspere's tree. Sweet Swan of Avon, would thou could'st have heard them! A crow was cawing from the steeple of the church in Mark's Square. The "feathered songsters of the grove," as the young woman whom I keep company with beautifully styles the pigs, were grunting in emulous concert in Erskine Road. A peacock was screaming at the 'Adelaide Tavern.' True, no deep-dyed pheasant met my dazzled gaze, but a gander was waddling in solitary state in the direction of the Water-works, though what business he could have had there baffles my conjecture. I looked in vain for the fox, no welcome visitor to the goose—but I distinctly saw a tom-cat scudding in wild haste towards Regent's Park. A barking dog was at his heels. Suddenly a sound as of many beasts clamouring together rent the air. It was the enchanting chorus of wolves, tigers, panthers, leopards, and lions in the Zoological Gardens, howling their matutinal greeting to glorious Apollo. The note of the plover was not to be heard, but in its place came the ear-piercing yells of the locomotives on the North London Railway. I came down from the mountain

more quickly than I had gone up, losing my gingham and spraining my 'off' ankle in the descent, but by way of consolation I have discovered that he who has not seen the sun rise from Primrose Hill on a July morning "knows not how fair the world is." Such a man does not deserve to live.

THE BLISS OF BEING BY YOURSELF.

When man, still in a state of innocency, was the one solitary inhabitant of the Garden of Eden, it was natural enough that he should have desired the society of somebody else to help him by digging, hoeing, raking, &c., while he superintended and gave orders. But directly that state of innocency vanished, and it is painful to think how short a time it lasted after man ceased to be alone, the benefit of companionship was gone. For, the least reflection will suffice to show that, except to the innocent, association is always perilous. People totally devoid of guile—presupposing (with a shudder) such monsters to exist—might mingle freely without any harm accruing. They would not have sense enough to try to get the better of each other. But in our fallen condition—and we have never got up since our first unfortunate *faux pas*—it is impossible for

us to mix with our fellows without damage to them or to ourselves. I put it to you in all fairness, is not this so? Either you quarrel with them, make love to them, sell them bargains fifty per cent. above their value, or spoil them by absurd generosity; or they commit similar atrocities upon you. With all due respect, I defy you (whoever you are) not to do one or other or perhaps all of these things. If you are gregarious, you must love or hate, steal or give. You cannot be passive among the crowd, and whatsoever you take in hand to do will hurt you or the object of your action—generally both. What then should be your course? Flee from the tumult; slip away from the multitude; come unto these yellow sands. No, don't! Go to some other sands; don't come to mine. But seek a solitude; and be at peace with all mankind by leaving them severely alone. You shall have nobody to quarrel with but yourself, and you'll soon make it up with that person; nobody to make love to except yourself, and him you will never deceive or be unkind to; nobody to swindle; you know yourself too well to be taken in by yourself; nobody to spoil by undue kindness; no amount of *that* would spoil *you*, you know. You may sing to yourself or recite, you are sure of an appreciative and admiring audience; you may argue with your-

self, and you will be equally gratified whether you vanquish your opponent or your opponent conquers you; or you may abuse yourself and accuse yourself of all sorts of villainy, and you will think fondly how modest, how conscientious you are. You can settle the affairs of the nation, including even the Irish difficulty, with unerring success if you are alone. It is only when others hear your methods that nasty objections and captious criticisms arise. You will not find it difficult to command the applause of listening senates if they listen only with *your* ears. If you wish to preach let it be only in soliloquy, for then no one will affront your eloquence by yawning or going to sleep. If any one has injured you and the offence rankles in your bosom, solitude will enable you to have it out with him to your heart's content. There you are sure to get the better of him. Your impeachment will be staggering; your repartees will be scathing; your denunciations crushing; you will triumph all along the line. Your enemy won't have a leg to stand on. He will crawl away abashed and disorganized. Now if you had not been alone, it might have been all the other way. Or, take a more agreeable case. Suppose you are in love, and have never found an entirely propitious moment wherein to plead your passion with proper fervour?

Somebody has been in the way, especially the object herself, and you have felt that you could not do yourself justice. How different is the state of things when you are quite alone! *Then* you can be fluent, tender, thrilling, impassioned, irresistible; the happiest thoughts flash into your mind; the most mellifluous accents glide through your lips; the daintiest conceits sparkle in your diction. Ardent prayers and vows the most vehement pour their whelming flood till she must melt, yea, though she were as hard as the nether mill-stone. And the beauty of it is that the victory costs you nothing, for—joy, oh, joy!—she cannot take you at your word.

Nor should it be forgotten that advantages similar to those enjoyed by the superfluous sex are also within reach of the indispensable. A beautiful lady living all alone can by a pleasant play of fancy make love to herself in the imaginary person of a welcome suitor. In that delightful character sustained by herself she can propose to herself, and after a spell of charming courtship bestow her hand and heart in holy matrimony upon the man of her choice without having to endure the infliction of a husband, for the most part an absurd and overbearing individual—if indeed he deserve to be called an individual. Or should the suitor prove ineligible,

the lady may dismiss him from her presence, though he be not present, with a proud plenitude of disdain, which she could not find it in her heart to display if he were so.

Who that lays to heart all these meditations can doubt the truth of Milton's saying—"Solitude sometimes is best society"?

WINTER BY THE SEA-SIDE.

THE difference between summer and winter is akin to that between comedy and tragedy. To certain minds of a meditative type the pathetic is the more attractive phase. Nature, not less picturesque and beautiful in her sorrow than in her gaiety, is far more sublime in the former. What can be grander, more majestic than a sea-storm?—and what can be more interesting to view, always provided you can view it from the quiet security of the shore? The rack of the tempest-driven clouds, the rush of the billows upon the surf-beaten coast, the contentious clamour of the many-tongued waters, and all the passionate accompaniments of the immemorial quarrel between wind and wave—a feud which may admit of truce but never of reconciliation, make up together a spectacle of surpassing splendour.

Seldom is the mystical affinity between the heart of nature and that of man so impressively apparent as in winter. The elemental strife touches "the electric chain wherewith we're darkly bound," as Byron finely expresses it. To detect and define these wonderful harmonies, these subtle symphonies between the material and the moral world, is a pursuit dear to the poet and the philosopher. Not less so is it to the painter. Therein dwells, indeed, one of the rarest secrets of pictorial art. In the precise proportion that he is gifted to feel these wonderful analogies, and to make them felt by others, is a painter worthy of being so denominated. The amount of his sensibility and skill in this regard is the measure of his greatness. A servile imitator of the merely external forms of things is no true painter. He only deserves the name who also penetrating the inner life seizes the spirit and sentiment of the scene, and so depicts them as to bring them home to the sympathy as well as the vision of mankind. That was the glory of Turner's art. So too was it of Cecil Lawson's—a young painter who, if not of inspiration equal to Turner's, was yet endowed with certain kindred gifts, which, had his life been spared, would undoubtedly have guided him to brilliant fame. His winter pictures are

poems. In the haggard expression of the storm-vexed sky, and in the melancholy aspect of the landscape, there is a touch of almost human pathos, which, though difficult of description in words, appeals irresistibly to the memory and imagination of every spectator not unfamiliar with sorrow.

Nor is it alone to the delineator of scenery, whether inland or marine, that this precious talent of tracing the relationship between the material and the moral is essential. It is likewise of the highest service to the animal painter. Witness the pictures by Sir Edwin Landseer. His dogs, horses, stags, monkeys, nay, his very squirrels, bear a certain resemblance, tragic or comic, as the case may be, to men, women, and children. If you would perceive at a glance the difference between simply imitative art and art not only imitative but also highly imaginative, you have only to contrast Mr. Ausdell's pictures with those of Sir Edwin. Among our younger animal painters I know no one who has so rich a vein of Æsopian humour as my friend Mr. Charles Dollman.

Reverting to the consideration of winter near the sea, it may be remarked that the wild weather prevalent, as I write, has revealed Nature under circumstances of the most tragical beauty. Last

evening was not to be surpassed for pathetic grandeur.

A NOVEMBER THOUGHT AT THE SEA-SIDE.

Fast fall the shades of parting day o'er mountain, moor, and lea,
And wild and sad the evening light glares on the lonely sea;
The clouds athwart the firmament in angry phalanx race;
The stars but thinly populate the wilderness of space.
A touch of human woe pervades the melancholy main;
I hear it in the night-wind's voice, I see it in the rain;
Like mankind's sighs and tears they are; and how the sky is vexed,
As brow of one with many griefs and many cares perplexed!
Look where we may all things appear beneath affliction's ban.
Oh! can it be that Nature is no happier than man?

Luckily for both neither is long in the same temper. They pass, with swift transition, from grave to gay, changing colour even as the Chameleon. Hope cometh with the morrow, and the morrow proved very lovely. It called to mind Fielding's charming little allegory—"That beautiful young lady, the Morning, now rose from her bed, and with a countenance blooming with fresh youth and sprightliness, with soft dews hanging on her

pouting lips, began to take her early walk over the eastern hills; and presently after, that gallant person, the Sun, stole softly from his wife's chamber to pay his addresses to her"—a proceeding, by the way, which, the Sun being married as well as 'gallant,' was, though very pleasant, hardly consistent with propriety. By and by out came that 'heavenly Chameleon,' the Rainbow, and the weather for the rest of the day was radiant and serene.

COQUETTES AND PRUDES.

MAN, dressed in a little brief authority, a pair of bags, and a chimney-pot hat, plays many fantastic tricks during his short career on earth, mostly to the prejudice of woman. Indeed the cruel treatment of the fair sex by the unfair is as tragic a theme as could possibly engage either the painter's pencil or the poet's pen. The more we think of it the more must we be amazed at the angelic patience of women that, being as they now are in strong numerical majority, they do not turn on their hereditary enemies and banish them from civilized regions to the waste places of the earth, there to wear buttonless shirts and footless socks, or none at all.

In proof of the inhuman usage to which the ladies are subjected, take one instance out of a thousand—the way they are persecuted with the reproach of coquetry. Zounds! What is a woman to do? If

94458

she is genial and polite she is denounced as a coquette; if she is cold and reserved she is sneered at for a prude. The angels in Mahomet's paradise are said to be composed one-half of fire and one-half of ice. That is the sort of creature that man would have for a sweetheart or a wife. And then he would not be satisfied with her. The monster!

A collection of the spiteful things that have been said about coquetry would be as bitter reading as any in the world. But it is worthy of remark that the absurdity of these sallies is not less than their venom—

> "Bright as the sun her eyes the gazer strike,
> And, as the sun, they shine on all alike,"

which only proves her universal benevolence. To make everybody the happier for her presence, even as the sun, that other heavenly philanthropist, gladdens all beholders, is the lady's generous ambition, and for that both she and the sun are to be insulted! Even unto the tomb the satirist pursues the coquette—

> "O'er this marble shed a tear
> For sweet Rosalind;
> All mankind were pleased with her,
> And she with—all mankind."

What higher tribute than this could be paid to

her memory? A heart large enough for the accommodation of the whole human race! Such hearts, whether in male or female bosoms, are as rare as precious, and should be honoured accordingly.

Ah! there is a vein of wit as truthful as delicate in this saying of Madame de Puysieux—"Men call that woman a coquette who pleases them, but whom they cannot succeed in pleasing." But granted that the reproach is true, and that women do sometimes play the coquette, what is their purpose? Merely to please the superfluous sex. Than this there can surely be no more amiable motive; yet for this they are to be derided by the supernumeraries of humanity. Well might Shakspere declare that the wintry wind is not more unkind than *man's* ingratitude; mark *man's*, not woman's. Woman is never ungrateful.

"Les femmes sont fort coquettes avant le mariage et beaucoup plus après"—women are great coquettes before marriage, but still greater after. The ungallant Gaul who penned these words plumed himself, no doubt, upon having shot a poisoned arrow. His sarcasm is in reality the sweetest of compliments, an admission that, unembittered by misfortune, women retain, even in bondage, the desire to commend themselves to the favour of their masters. Who ever heard of a man's being more attentive to the ladies

after his merciful conversion into a husband than he had been while still a bachelor?

"To be a coquette is to promise to twenty men and to grant only to nineteen," observes with insidious humour a French writer of the last century; and it may well be that the twentieth man deserved no more than he received. M. De Bernard gives a different definition: "To grant nothing, but to let everything be hoped for; to keep arguing upon the threshold of Love without ever opening the door—*there* is the whole art and science of coquetry!" Well, suppose this to be so: does it tell against the coquette? By no means. When we consider what fools men make of themselves when they are in love, and worse still how cruelly they befool the objects of their lunatic passion, we are constrained to admit that the gentlewoman who keeps her suitor in pleasant chat at the portals of the Temple of Hymen, but never goes in with him, does good service, not to him and herself alone, but also to society.

The injunction to be kind to our enemies, and to do good to those who despitefully use us is, of all Christian injunctions, the most celestial in principle and the most difficult of observance. Indeed, the only member of that disreputable household, the Human Family, who systematically endeavours to

carry the benignant maxim into practice is the coquette. She tries to please even those whom she despises, and for so doing she is compared to a mirror which reflects all images without retaining any.

"Même pour ceux qu'elle méprise
Sa vanité se met en frais;
Une coquette a pour devise
Plaire toujours aimer jamais.
Son cœur, ou chacun trouve place,
Jamais n'a connu de lien;
C'est un mirroir dont la surface
Recoit tout, et ne garde rien."

That is actionable. It is to be hoped that at no distant day the Sex will have an Attorney-General of their own, a worthy Anacharsis Clootz, who shall institute proceedings for libel in the Law Courts against the indictors of such scandalous libels.

No more odious instance of the baseness of persons of the male persuasion need be required than that furnished by the attack of Warton upon Queen Elizabeth for the one lovable quality in her great character—her desire to be admired by the so-called lords of creation. "Not less vain of her person than her politicks," writes the slanderer, "this stately coquette, the guardian of the Protestant faith, the terror of the sea, the mediatrix of the factions of France, and the scourge of Spain, was infinitely

mortified if an ambassador at the first audience did not tell her she was the finest woman in Europe." And so she undoubtedly was.

Trace to their origin these ill-natured charges of coquetry, and you shall find that they all spring from the same fountain-head—the remorseless, unconscionable selfishness of men. There is not a man on earth who would not like to be the only man on earth, that he might have all the women in the world at his feet.

> "I do confess thee sweet, but find
> Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
> Thy favours are but like the wind
> That kisseth everything it meets;
> And since thou canst with more than one,
> Thou'rt worthy to be loved by none."

He would whistle off his sweetheart for being able to love other men besides him: yet he would fain roam through the garden of beauty himself, like a butterfly "kissing all buds that are pretty and sweet."

If there were no coquettes conversation would lose its zest and piquancy; the dinner-table and the ball-room would alike be reduced to the dismal monotony of a Methodist meeting; the social world would be as dull as respectable. It is that amiable desire to

please which is of the very essence of coquetry, that gives tenderness to woman's voice, silverness to her laugh, the radiance of benevolence to her features, and the graces of fashion to her costume. Do away with coquetry and Mr. Worth might retire from business, and the West-end shops, now so wonderful to look upon for their astonishing array of articles for the enhancement of female loveliness, might all be closed. Consider the injury to the picturesqueness of London; consider, too, the fearful detriment to commerce.

Be it remembered, that in coquetting women do but follow in the footsteps of Nature, the Queen of Coquettes, and the inventor of the enchanting art. On they go—"Natura dea viam monstrante."

How charming is this conceit of a French poetess comparing France in spring-time to a coquette!

"Notre France au printemps, est coquette et parée,
Sur ses bords reverdis bât la mer azurée,
N'es tu donc pas heureuse ici?"

But everywhere the same resemblance may be traced. Look around! The trees dally with the zephyrs, the flowers shed their fragrance on each vagrant breeze, the waves gambol on the shore, the echo mimics every sound that floats upon the air, the clouds keep playing around the moon, the shadows

flirt with the substances, the substances with the shadows; the sun smiles upon the icicles which tearfully melt beneath his fond effulgence. What is all that but coquetting I should like to know? And then for kissing—there is no end to it.

> The rakish winds kiss all they meet,
> As on viewless wings they fly;
> The valleys kiss the mountains' feet,
> And the mountains kiss the sky.

Such is the order of creation; yet woman, lovely woman, the paragon of creation, is not to follow suite! Outrageous!

And who is he that forbids them? Man; yes, man, who dressed in clothes as ridiculous as himself, and decked out in a thousand coxcombial airs, goes about the world breaking female hearts like chinaware. This is the creature who would not allow woman to flirt, he himself being of all flirts under the sun the most inveterate. The 'mashers' with their garotte collars, the crutch-and-toothpick curiosities, the swells, exquisites, and dandies of all sorts and degrees who saunter through society airing their insignificance, what are they one and all but male coquettes? Then again there are the *dilletanti*, who do but sport and dally in the realms of literature and philosophy. "Pour moi, je regarde les savans et

les hommes d'esprit comme des coquettes," said the first Napoleon.

So much for male coquettes. As for the female, they are simply the ornament of their own sex and the delight of ours.

From Coquetry to Prudery the transition is as marked as from Southern Cross to Polar Star. Extremes, unlike some husbands and wives, occasionally meet, and are then found to be not wholly unlike in cause, however dissimilar in effect. Between the Coquette and the Prude there is a certain curious affinity. Their points of resemblance have been delicately defined by an ancient writer. "The Prude and Coquette, as different as they appear in their behaviour, are in reality the same kind of women. The motive of action in both is the affectation of pleasing men. They are sisters of the same blood and constitution, only one chooses a grave and the other a light dress. The Prude appears more virtuous, the Coquette more vicious than she really is. The distant behaviour of the Prude tends to the same purpose as the advances of the Coquette; and you have as little reason to fall into despair from the severity of the one as to conceive hopes from the familiarity of the other."

Very true. It is after all only a question of

tactics. Cæsar vanquished by dash; Fabius by delay; and the sex have surely a clear right to conduct their delightful war on whichever lines they prefer. If it were possible to collect the statistics of female conquest, it would perhaps be proved that the Prude wins more hearts than the Coquette. Owen Feltham, with homely but potent imagery, compares an austere Beauty to a pair of bellows which kindles fire by means of frigid breath. Fanny may be a Prude; but Fanny may be 'cornered'; and "could you but catch little Fan in a corner, you'd say she's the best little girl in the world." "A light, airy girl who desires to attract attention," is Johnson's pretty definition of a coquette. Such damsels have perhaps fewer lovers than admirers. The maidens who, though not neglectful of their chances, yet observe a quiet demeanour and affect the shade, probably achieve the greatest triumphs in the field of matrimony. Men prize the most highly that which it costs them the greatest trouble to acquire. They know that, whether in love or in friendship, "Your cold people are beyond all price, when once you've broken their confounded ice." In the breaking of that ice there is a certain satisfaction very soothing to a man's vanity,

PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEEN BETTER DAYS.

We have it on the authority of a distinguished member of that useful and immemorial corporation, the 'Ancients,' that a brave man struggling with adversity is the most sublime spectacle that the gods themselves can look upon; and despite the disreputable private character of the majority of the deities, we may conclude that a high compliment to the unfortunate brave was intended in the statement. But it may be affirmed that persons much more respectable than Messrs. Jove, Apollo, Mars, and Co., to say nothing of their exceedingly questionable female relatives, find an interesting subject of contemplation in the man who has suffered reverses, even though he be not brave and do not struggle at all, but accepts his position with melancholy resignation. Strange as it may seem, it is none the less true that those who have seen better days usually

rise in the estimation of mankind by their fall; and even as everybody is said to look well in mourning, the threadbare mantle of adversity lends a statuesque dignity to the human form, and, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. The famous saying of the French cynic rises to the memory—"Il y a toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplait pas dans les misères de nos amis." To have seen better days! There is in the phrase a mournful music that touches every heart, and causes the sweet waters of sympathy to well up unchecked. Where is the rabid Republican who does not envy Candide his opportunity of showing a graceful hospitality, at that dinner-party of cashiered kings? And who is there that does not love and honour the desolate Lear, more even than if he had been a monarch of the Cole or popular order, and had died in the odour of regality, amid music, incense, and wine? How one shudders as the terrible words fall from King Henry's lips which hurl poor Falstaff from his pride of place into the abyss of despair, and "kill his heart"! By the piteous time when he "fumbles with the sheets" and "babbles o' green fields," we have clean forgotten his swaggering, his thieving, his big drinking, and only think of him as the once-prosperous gentleman who has fallen upon evil days. Nay, did not the avenging

Hugo sheathe that awful weapon of his, and in noble verse scorn to strike the corse on which the stranger's earth lay heavy—the corse that had been Louis Napoleon?

Never having personally exercised regal functions, and believing, however erroneously, that but few of my readers have done so, it is impossible either for them or me to appreciate exactly the sensations of—shall we say?—'subsided Royalty'; but greatness has its penalties as well as its privileges, and one cannot help thinking that the uncrowned head must experience a sense of relief, similar to that which the rider of a restive horse must feel upon finding himself deposited in a soft place with his limbs in tolerably good repair. On these he can still rely. Though he may no longer ride he may walk; and come what will he can cull comfort from the thought that he knows the worst. And indeed it would appear that after living under a microscope which magnifies your vices, and what is worse, your virtues, several thousand times it would be quite a luxury, though only for the change, to be looked at through a telescope reversed But these views are advanced with the greatest possible diffidence, and I shall be most happy to receive from any person born in the purple, but now

disrobed, such corrections as his disastrous experience may supply.

"Men do their broken weapons rather use than their bare hands," so it is not surprising to find that those who have been obliged to sink down the 'facilis descensus' of fortune occasionally make capital of their reverses. You remember that that distinguished civic functionary, Mr. Dogberry, J.P., not content with the enumeration of his personal advantages of mind and body, mentioned, as an additional claim to respect, that he had had 'losses,' and therein had proved his right to style himself 'a wise fellow'; and rightly so, seeing that to have had losses is to have had something to lose, and to have had something to lose is to be still respectable; and the respectable are the wise, as all the world knows. There is, moreover, a vagueness, a mystery about their former position greatly to the advantage of the fallen. You are led to picture to yourself a previous Dwalagiri or Chimborazo altitude, whereas they very likely only occupied a modest Primrose-Hill elevation. But you never venture to lift the curtain that conceals the past, while they and the initiated only drop such hints as will increase your reverence. Of course, if you have been behind the scenes, you observe a similar dignified reticence,

merely murmuring, "Capital position once," "Unfortunate speculations," "Ruinous litigation"; or perhaps, "Run through his property," "Lost on the Turf," or "On the town," &c. &c. &c. Strange to say, the more respectable of these reasons do not make so favourable an impression upon the hearer as the less excusable, even the "&c. &c. &c.," and it were useless to deny that men are apt to feel a sneaking reverence for those who have brought about their own fall, while they only coldly pity the sufferers from inevitable calamity or the knavery of others. The hero, however insane or suicidal he may have been, will always be admired more than the meekest and most innocent victim—except, of course, by you and me, my dear, whose tone of mind is exceptionally pure and elevated. *Our* veal is not stuffed for the prodigal, but rather for him who has fallen among thieves.

Man, being a featherless biped, unquestionably descends with more grace than he exhibits in ascension. We have all been pained—for their sakes, of course—by the want of ease and dignity displayed by those of our friends who have attained a higher sphere than our own. We had hoped that elevation would have made no change for the worse in their behaviour, we are sure it would not in our case; but

alas! repugnant as it is to our feelings to do so, we are constrained to acknowledge that there is undoubtedly an alteration. They are not what they were. They do not slight us. Oh no, nothing of that sort!—but, &c. &c. How different it is with the losers in the game of life! We are delighted with their fortitude, their resignation. Instead of weak repinings and desolation, as really one might have expected, we find a grave composure, a resolution to make the best of things, and an almost cheerful adaptation to the inevitable. "Really," we say, "Tompkinson is positively improved by his misfortune. I never thought he was so good a fellow. Ah! there is nothing like adversity to show you what any man is made of." Theoretically, the human race, Ghebir-like, worship the rising sun and regard the shadows of night with aversion, extol success and scorn failure. "Sequitur Fortunam ut semper, et odit damnatos." Here is an instance expressly to the contrary. Depend upon it, man resembles another maligned being—he is not altogether so black as he is painted. The mode in which the penitential garb is worn differs materially, as men take their punishment according to their mood. There are who accept it in a simple, unpretentious way, which to witness is a melancholy pleasure. The meekness of

others, however, is of a most exasperating type, and, always in the most Christian-like and forgiving manner, seems to accuse *you* of being deeply implicated in the universal conspiracy which has shorn them of their glories. They don't complain—dear, no! but they make you feel that you ought to have done something or left something undone which would have saved them. Widely different from these, but producing much the same effect, are they who writhe and roar beneath the lash, who never tire of calling your attention to their wounds, as if pointing out with intense bitterness the perfidy of mankind, which has brought them to their present condition. They frighten you with vague threats of what they will do, and seem to demand that you should avenge them on their adversaries, or for evermore forfeit your claim to manhood and honour. A very unpleasant variety is that whose pride grows and swells exceedingly through irrigation by the brackish waters of adversity—who "thank heaven they are gentlemen still, however they have fallen." They are always on the watch to detect anything like patronage. "However poor they may be, they have not lost their independent spirit." It matters not how circumspect you may be, or how dexterous, they are determined not to be conciliated, and will

resent anything like sympathy or kindness more bitterly than exultation over their trouble. The other extremes "sound the very bass note of humility." They kiss the rod and fondle it. They have no doubt they deserve all that has happened. They must put their pride into their pocket now, of course; they have nothing else to put there. It would be absurd to pretend to anything, in their present condition. They were never stuck up, but now—well, they must think themselves lucky if they can get enough to eat and drink, and anything to wear. They suppose their friends will not let them starve. This is very praiseworthy, and not a little irritating.

But among people who have seen better days, as well as among those who have not, there are strange diversities of character. Some men take kindly to their yoke; some shake it, causing it to gall the more; some, while writhing, pretend to like it. That riches are not essential to happiness is a proposition which I can affirm with as much confidence as any of which I have no personal knowledge. But that riches, however superfluous in the matter of happiness, are, in the estimation of some persons, indispensable to honour, is a fact too patent to admit of controversy. Witness, among many other proofs, the

horror with which certain of those who have seen better days resent the imputation of poverty. Though these poor souls have come down in the world, they cannot endure the thought that the world should know it. To avoid the ignominy of this disclosure, they will condescend to the most pitiable devices. How often do we read in the papers an advertisement announcing that a lady and a gentleman, having a house too large for their personal requirements, are prepared to enter into negotiation with other ladies and gentlemen who may be disposed to rent a portion of it. . The reason why the advertisers reside in a house too large for their personal requirements is solely and expressly that they may gain a *living* by letting lodgings. This is the honest truth of the matter, but they fancy that they can throw dust in the eyes of their well-to-do friends by a transparent artifice. Heaven comfort their capacity! Their well-to-do friends see through them, as through a window. I cannot help thinking that in this and many similar respects, people who have seen better days deceive themselves with a false ideal of dignity. Fortune, the jade, has played many a scurvy trick upon true-born gentlemen before now, and many more she means to play; and doubtless, it is a bitter trial for a gentleman to have to let lodgings. Yet

after all, a gentleman is not the less so for having to submit to this tribulation. There are worse troubles at sea, and on land too. The only dishonour is in his attempt to make it appear that he can keep a lodging-house without being a lodging-house keeper. The more noble course, by far, would be to drink the bitter cup with as few wry faces as possible, saying nothing about it, and above all things eschewing the mean deception of pretending that what you know to be wormwood is in reality honey. We should "instruct our sorrows to be proud." People who, having fallen from their high estate, become professional martyrs trading upon their sorrows may provoke pity—hardly respect; but the world presents no nobler or more touching spectacle than that of a true gentleman or gentlewoman preserving in adversity the grace, gentleness, and dignity of better days.

Deteriorated days cannot, perhaps, be classed as a positive advantage, yet have they certain consolations which should not be overlooked. They release from the necessity of that most agonizing of operations, the keeping-up appearances. Trappings and appurtenances, luxuries and observances, which were with difficulty sustained in the better days, may be cast off with a propriety that cannot be questioned, and

the catastrophe shall be answerable for all. Considering that the greater part of expenditure is for superfluities, and generally irksome superfluities, it is a positive relief when an altered destiny enables one to discard them with a good grace and—most important—without provoking injurious comment, for that has become a virtue which otherwise would be a vice, retrenchment without ruin being naturally so held by the world. Moreover, even as you are in a position to knock off wearisome excrescences of ceremony, a golden opportunity is afforded you of reducing the number of your friends to reasonable proportions, without having to undergo the disagreeable process of offending them. In the preceding speculations, it has been assumed that the wreck has furnished materials for the construction of a raft sufficient, however rude, to bear you over the depths; but unhappily, this is not always the case. Too often it happens that alien help is required to save the crew from sinking, and this help is sometimes given so churlishly, and is accompanied by such exactions, as to be little better than the doom from which it saves. What can be more piteous than to see some poor gentleman obliged to eat the bread and endure the vulgarity of a parvenu patron, who scorns his poverty and hates his refinement? Or

what more deplorable spectacle can there be than that of a delicate and accomplished lady forced to be the companion of a woman who ought to be her scullery-maid? Are those harbours of refuge—the alms-houses—really havens of rest, I wonder? I fear not. They are too microcosmic. It is said that even in the ashes of the inmates live their wonted fires, and that no gates, bars, porters, or regulations succeed in keeping away those determined visitors, envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness. But what of that other asylum, the——well, in fact, the Workhouse? Admirably designed and constructed, drained and ventilated, perfectly regulated, administered and controlled, with every appearance of comfort for the weak, the infirm, and the afflicted, strange to say, it is not popular; and obstinate people, who have seen better days, persist in dying and creating a scandal rather than go into it. It is inexplicable; though, no doubt, a parcel of poets and sentimentalists are answerable for a great part of the irrational prejudice. By these triflers many high-flown representations have been made of the sweetness of home, the pleasures of one's own fireside, the delights of liberty, the nobility of an independent spirit, the glory of death rather than what you consider dishonour—all of which are, no doubt, well enough for the heroes

and heroines of romances, but manifestly unfitted for elderly persons without resources. Nevertheless, these dear old souls cling to these romantic arguments in the most illogical and inconvenient way, to the disgust of Guardians, the irritation of the Police, the annoyance of Coroners and their jurymen, and the heartless disturbance of well-to-do people, discussing the morning papers over their tea, toast, and cold pheasant.

FEBRUARY FANCIES.

DEAR Friends and Friendesses, where is the use of grumbling about the weather? Byerlady, it will have its own way, grumble as we may. Consider the absurdity of such complaints—how unreasonable they are, and how illogical! Winter will be wintry. To blame it on that account is like finding fault with a circle for being round.

Sursum corda! The grand thing is to keep up your heart—to preserve the sunshine of the soul unclouded—let the firmament scowl as it may. Never, O never, let it be said of us, sweet friends and friendesses, that we wear what WILLIAM calls 'February faces'—"full of frost, of storm and cloudiness." Apples will grow again; the sun will shine once more. Lombard Street to a China orange, and Piccadilly to a peach they will. Even though they

should not, let us not despair. Never give up. He who loseth money loseth much; he who loseth friends loseth more; but he who loseth courage loseth everything. Versified, that hopeful maxim may perhaps, for lack of better rhymes, be allowed to run thus—

> He loseth much who loseth ore;
> Who loseth friendship loseth more;
> But, oh, whatever ills befall,
> Who loseth courage loseth all.

Besides, there are two sides to this question of February, as to most other questions. But eight-and-twenty days are numbered in this twelfth of the year, which is probably the reason why that grim satirist Emmanuel Kant exclaimed, "Happy, happy February, in which men shed fewer tears, heave fewer sighs, than in any other month of the year!"

Whether a man's imagination is more conducive to his happiness or to his misery is a question which manifestly depends upon the use to which a man puts his imagination; for there are pains as well as pleasures attendant upon that splendid gift. If we would only employ fancy for the painting of true and beautiful pictures all would be well; but the grief of it is that we are always imagining vain things, and depicting in the darkest colours a future we may

never see, or which, should we see it, may prove richer in joy than in sorrow. Instead of gladdening our hearts with the notion that our lot is a blessed one, and that still greater blessings are on their way to us, we brood upon the thought that ours is a sad destiny, and that new misfortunes are looming at no great distance to make it sadder still.

If, affecting a joyous vein as that best fitted to qualify us to cope with the troubles of life, we would give free rein to our simple powers of hypothesis, what charming problems might not we conjure up to beguile our judgment withal! How delightful to speculate upon the various beneficial uses to which you, my good reader, would put £10,000 a year—what precious enjoyments you might secure for yourself, and better still for others—if only you were in possession of that noble income! How glorious to imagine yourself a King or a Queen, that you might go about with a golden crown upon your head, and bestow peerages and fine estates upon all whom you love! O, to think what signal service you might render to your friends—bless them! aye, and to your enemies also; for, thus happily circumstanced, you could afford to forgive them.

Then again there are nice little nuts of conjecture which, to crack, would keep your curiosity perpetually

on the *qui vive*. These be the enchantments of hypothesis, and to indulge in them is assuredly one of the highest privileges of humanity. Has it ever occurred to you to fancy what your sensations would be if, while you alone remained perfectly sane, everybody else on earth should suddenly go stark staring mad —not in a melancholy sense, by no means; but in a right jolly and jovial mood—as mad as hares in March, or as Messrs. Lincoln and Bennett, and all other hatters all the year round? Suppose that looking out of window one fine morning you were to see the policeman standing on his head, the postman dancing up and down the street in fetters, your laundress making love to you from over the way, your housemaid waltzing with the butcher's boy—and your tradespeople pitching somersaults in front of your house—all as mad as Tilburina in the *Critic*, but all, mind you, as happy as the day is long, while you alone retained your senses, and were as wise as Solomon the son of David—what *would* your feelings be in such a condition of affairs? Let us put the case into verse, and sing it to the air that proved fatal to the life of the aged cow—poor thing!

THE SORROWS OF SUPPOSITION.

Suppose the Bobby, on his beat,
By fantasy were led
To take a posture indiscreet,
And stand upon his head;

Suppose the Postman—pretty pet!
Should dance about in fetters,
And on his left leg pirouette,
While handing you your letters;

Suppose your Laundress were to fling
Her soapy arms about you,
And say, "I've brought the wedding-ring,
I cannot live without you";

Suppose the tradesmen when they call,
Should play demented tricks,
And baker, grocer, milkman, all
Were ramping lunatics;

Suppose all people, near and far—
Excepting only you—
Should go as mad as hatters are,
What ever would you do?

You'd soon lament your sanity,
And languish for the day
When, set from Wisdom's guidance free,
You'd be as mad as they.

So true is it that a man may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion.

HOMO ET ANIMA SUA.

HOMO.

DESTINED to soar on triumphant pinion
To an immortal goal,
Heir as thou art of divine dominion,
Why art thou sad, my Soul?
High o'er the stars in delightful regions,
Far from Earth's senseless fray,
There is thy home 'mongst the heavenly legions
Yet art thou sad alway.
Tell me, Belovèd, what dark idea
Cloudeth thy radiant glee;
Quare tristis es, Anima mea?
Quare conturbas me?

ANIMA.

Perishing partner of hopes eternal,
Dear as to me Thou art,
Though we shall meet in the spheres supernal
Here we must one day part.
O my Belovèd, thou scarce believest
What is in store for thee;
Sorely thy Spirit's peace thou grievest,
'Tis *thou* that dost trouble me.
False to thyself, and perverse, unwary,
Swift though life's shadows flee—
Ergo tristis sum, Socie care,
Quia conturbas me.

CHILDREN.

If childhood were put down by Act of Parliament, and if everybody were to be born of mature age, even as Minerva sprang from the brain of Jupiter—how strange, how passing strange, would be the aspect of society! How uncomfortable too would be the prospects of people now engaged in the baby-linen business! *Figurez vous!* Fancy the world without children! The world without the sun would be bright in comparison.

> "Les enfants sont ce que nous sommes;
> Ils ont nos goûts, nos sentimens;
> Les hommes sont de petits hommes,
> Et les hommes de grands enfants."

So sings a French poet whose song howbeit must be taken, as the songs of poets commonly, with rather more than a grain of salt. True, men are but children of a larger growth and a fuller folly; but

the very largeness of their growth and the very fulness of their folly deprive them of the artless enchantment that hovers around childhood pure and simple. That ignorance—O how blissful! that unclouded faith, that pretty prattling diction, and all those witching little ways so delightful in conjunction with miniature forms, cherub features, and youth so young as to be as yet without memory, would be intolerable in association with lofty stature, care-lined faces, and years saddened by remembrance. It may not be. We shall be compelled to surrender much; but we cannot do without children. *There* we draw the proverbial line. Many lovely things will go down before the ruthless torrent of Radical innovation. Many and many a noble institution, dear from immemorial time to this inviolate island of the brave and free, shall we have to sacrifice to the iconoclasts whose rage is as ravenous as insensate; but let them understand once for all that they must not presume to abolish childhood. It is children who give beauty and freshness to life; they are the rose and expectancy of each fair state. But for the golden vision of children, the grace and gaiety of their manner, the music of their laughter, the pure radiance of their innocency, hope would die out of the hearts of men and women. Children are the

seraphs of Hope—the guileless angels who do her bidding in this garden of a world which but for her and them would, indeed, be no better than a wilderness.

No age, how remote or barbarous soever, is without mention in its literature of the love and admiration with which children have been always and everywhere regarded. "I have one child—one pretty child—whose beauty is like unto that of the chrysanthemums—Cleis, my well-beloved Cleis, whom I would not give for all Lydia." So wrote Sappho of Mytelene six hundred years before the advent of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." Of the *Meleager* of Euripides all has been lost except this solitary fragment rescued by Stobæus for the joy of parental posterity: "Sweet is the light of the sun, sweet the sight of a quiet sea, and that of a great river, and that of the earth blooming in spring-tide; but, trust me, there is no sweeter sight in the world than to behold lovely children flourishing in your house." "That little boy of mine," said Themistocles to his friends, "is the arbiter of Greece. He governs his mother, his mother me, I the Athenians, and the Athenians Greece." Never was there man irredeemably bad who, amid all his aberrations, still

retained a love of children. Dislike of them is an aversion odiously unnatural. Nothing that ever fell from the bitter pen or still more bitter tongue of Montaigne is less creditable to him than the cynical incertitude of his allusion to the deaths in his own family. "Children" being the topic of conversation —"Children," he repeated musingly, "Ah! yes, to be sure. I rather think that I have lost one or two of them." Yet the lively old Gascon who could speak thus heartlessly of his vanished little ones is said to have been the best of sons. So illogical, so contradictory is human nature.

Nothing can be less reasonable than to expect children to be so. Indeed, it is their very unreasonableness that most endears them to us. Were they reasonable as we are, or as we deem ourselves to be, there would be no difference between them and us. The gaiety of childhood springs from two sources—novelty and surprise. These delightful sensations guide the nascent faculties through paths of pleasantness. "Thought would destroy their paradise." Time kills novelty; experience is the death of surprise; and so perish the essential elements of enjoyment. We old stagers who—alas the day!—have eaten of the tree of knowledge and found the fruit less palatable than we had expected, have learnt

that saddest of all lessons—distrust: not so these young comers. Not as yet has the fatal hour of disillusion struck for them. Theirs are still the priceless privileges of faith. In a world whose maxim is "nulla fides fronti," and where everything is anything but what it seems, they are well content to judge according to appearances. Happy they are and happy they will continue to be until they reach the disenchanting age of reason. Comic on the surface, yet tenderly pathetic at the core, is this unquestioning confidence. Betray it not.

It has been well said that children have neither past nor future, and that (which happens but rarely with us) they enjoy the present. Their blissful indifference to to-morrow and all that it may bring forth is described by Victor Hugo with charming grace of fancy—

"Enfant, rêve encore!
Dors! O mes amours!
Ta jeune âme ignore
Ou s'en vont tes jours
Le courant t'emporte
Mais tu dors toujours."

And who could find it in his heart to waken him? Whether in childhood or in manhood sleep is the most precious thing in life, and for this simple

reason, that when you are asleep you forget all about it.

The *naïveté* of children is one of their greatest charms. But that *naïveté* to be truly charming must spring from ingenuous innocence. A precocious child, wise beyond his years, is an intolerable imp. He is usually some ill-starred little creature whose sad fate it has been to be bred exclusively among grown-up people. Debarred from that which is indispensable to youth—the companionship of the young—he acquires habits and notions in ridiculous disproportion to his age. He is a little man rather than a boy, and may be likened to a frigate that has been cut down to a gun-boat. No. Let us have children, wild, vivacious, unsophisticated, "as fresh as roses in a thicket found, and pure as dew upon their crimson leaves," as Wordsworth beautifully expresses it.

The one thing tragical about children is their desire not to be such. In their insensibility to the priceless blessings of their present condition, there is to us who know all about the sorrows of maturity something unspeakably sad. To think that the young should long to escape from the paradise of youth! Would heart of *man* or *woman* believe it? Yet so it is. To be 'grown up'—so they always

phrase it—is the summit of children's ambition; but—

> "O ye tiny elves who sport
> Like linnets in a bush,
> You little know what grief you court
> When manhood is your wish."

Friends and Friendesses, dear my readers, who, like me the writer of this vanishing page, know what it is to be 'grown up,' O tell me this—What has become of the children we once were? Though they had died in the bloom of childhood they could not be lost to us more irretrievably than they now are. Whither have they gone? Where tarry they? What *has* become of them? Of all the many mysteries under the sun this is the most bewildering.

GRACE.

GRACE is difficult of definition, still more difficult of explanation. What is it, whence comes it—that exquisite attribute, the grant whereof to some sheds enchantment around them, while the denial of it to others leaves them uninteresting and unimpressive? The cause is inexplicable; the effect is unmistakable. Grace is not an attainment. It is distinctly and essentially a gift—a gift beyond the reach of art. If it be not born with you like a tenor voice or the *afflatus* of poetic inspiration it may never be acquired. Once inherited from Nature, it may, of course, like all her other fine endowments, be improved by culture even as "those walk easiest who have learned to dance;" but no tuition will avail for the acquisition of it. *Nascitur non fit.* Locke will have it that "the legs of a dancing-master and the fingers of a musician fall as it were naturally into regular and admirable motions." Be assured,

Great Interpreter of the Human Understanding, that they do so *naturally* or not at all. It stands to reason that no amount of training can develop a principle which does not already exist. The *vis* must be *insita*. Learning may evolve but cannot implant it. And precious indeed are the privileges of persons thus richly gifted. To the genially-graceful all things seem possible. They are never at fault—never in a dilemma from which they may not make good their escape with flying colours. They have a way with them which there is no resisting. They are like that admirably-contrived lifeboat invented by my ingenious friend, the Hon. Col. Lambart, and called happily by him the 'Utrimque,' which no matter into what stormy seas it may be launched is sure to right itself.

Burke defines gracefulness as "an idea belonging to posture and motion." It is that no doubt, but it is much more besides. Grace is of various kinds. There is a grace of action, another of voice, another of expression, all finding their aggregate perfection in that most magical of all earthly things, the witchery of manner. The most obvious manifestation of Grace consists in unconscious elegance of movement. To dance in the line of beauty, which is a curve, not an angle, is to realize what has been

prettily designated the poetry of motion. It is not to be told what a picturesque charm may dwell in the action of an arm or the waive of a hand. To walk into a room with easy dignity, to sit a horse well, aye, even to open and shut a fan in a becoming fashion, are achievements possible to those alone who have been born graceful. Still more wonderful is grace of speech—the art of modulating the voice to a musical key and of saying whatever is to be said in a pleasant tone and with a winning way. As for grace of facial expression, it defies all analysis. It is of all human mysteries, at once the most marvellous and the most delightful. That brilliant suffusion, that glow of a more than earthly light which on the impulse of some happy thought or on the touching of some tender chord of sympathy sparkles in the eyes and mantles in the cheek, is more than half the secret of beauty. Beauty there is none without it.

"What's female beauty but an air divine
Through which the soul's more lovely graces shine?
They, like the sun, irradiate all between;
The body charms because the mind is seen."

The quotation is old, but the author is Young.

Certain nations are exceptionally rich in grace of manner; others are deplorably poor. The French

are graceful in a sense, and would be still more so but for their everlasting shrug of the shoulders and their ridiculous redundancy of gesture. Italians and Spaniards are almost as graceful as the Oriental races. The blackguard Organ-fiend who, by means of his execrable engine destroys your peace, shatters your nerves, and drives you to the verge of madness, stretches out his unwashed hand for black-mail and smiles on you the while with a grace that might win the birds off the bushes. His grace is equal to his insolence, the soapless scoundrel! In England are many graceful people; but the English as a people are not graceful. How few Englishmen know how to make a bow, or to take their hats off to a lady! The chimney-pots with which they surmount their heads do not conduce to dignity either of action or aspect. It is not easy to give elegance of movement to a thing in itself egregiously inelegant. The next time you are in the sculpture-galleries at the British Museum just put your hat on the head of Apollo or of Julius Cæsar and see what the effect will be.

Somebody has said (I believe it is myself) that between grace of form and grace of manner there is a mystical and sympathetic relation. With symmetrical anatomy you shall find elegant movement

and easy deportment. Human—or inhuman—beings with large feet and hands and ears which stand out like the handles of a vase are rarely, if ever, graceful. The wild gazelle, whether on Judah's hill or in Greenwich Park, is small of hoof and lithe of limb; and is she not as graceful as a *girl*? In that internecine domestic circle known as the 'human family,' small feet and hands and pretty little ears are the outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual refinement. That is the reason why Grace is pre-eminently and distinctively the attribute of women. The fair sex are, as a rule, well made; the unfair are for the most part but clumsily constructed. There are exceptions. Here and there you happen on a man who, like the sometime Prince of Denmark, is "the mould of form" as well as "the glass of fashion," but such men are scarce, and intelligibly so. It is universally admitted that Man is a failure, Woman a success. Whatever little charm the former may exceptionally possess he owes altogether to the latter! "Sans la femme," says Châteaubriand, "l'homme serait rude et grossier, et il ignorait la grace qui n'est que le sourire de l'amour." It is not too much to affirm that Grace is a more potent weapon than Beauty itself for the subjugation of the superfluous section of the community, by which of

course is meant the male. Who can resist a graceful woman? Mr. John Milton, formerly of Bread Street E.C., in the city of London, knew all about Eve, who gave primitive birth to our race (Oh, that she had left it alone!), and we have it on his incomparable authority that "grace was in all her steps." Depend upon it, that was the gift which much more than the heaven in her eye, or the dignity and love in her every gesture, led to the downfall of Adam —a respectable Clapham Road sort of person, but weak, very weak. But there! He could not help it, poor fellow! How should he? Even the coarsest, roughest natures are not insensible to the witchery of female manner. They go down before it like the oak before the flashing axe. How exquisitely humorous is that scene in the *Cyclops* of Euripides, where the one-eyed Polyphemus, wallowing in debauchery, sees the Graces in his drunken dream and fancies that they are enamoured of him and tempting him, *Karites peirosi me!*

Though Grace, affluent and enduring, is in-born and not to be acquired, it visits, like eloquence, on sudden and special occasions, even those who are not richly nor regularly endowed with it. On those occasions it is distinctly the outcome of vehement passion. Such passion is invariably graceful—grace-

ful indeed it is in the precise proportion of its vehemence. That is the reason why Grace, precious to all men, is to the actor priceless. There is no fine acting without it. To the low comedian truly it may not be all-essential. The mere character-actor needs it not; on the contrary, nodosities of manner and eccentricities of look and carriage may sensibly contribute to the effect of an impersonation founded on grotesqueness. But to the tragedian and the light comedian—artists of far higher calibre than the character-actor—Grace is absolutely indispensable. Show me an earnest actor and I will show you in the same man a graceful one; for whether on or off the stage the transport of earnest emotion "begets smoothness" and "the nameless graces which no methods teach." He who under the spell of histrionic illusion, whether in tragedy or comedy, is whirled out of self-consciousness, and for the moment fancies himself the ideal personage he personifies, never lacks grace—never, never. Therefore do I venture to affirm that in the highest realms of histrionic art the amount of a player's grace is the measure of his greatness.

Sad it is to think to what pitiful expedients actors have recourse who, being devoid of passion, are necessarily so of grace as well. We have many

players of polished manners and elegant deportment; but

> "When some well-graced actor leaves the stage,
> All eyes are bent on him who enters next."

And it may be that he who enters next has not a particle of grace. He lacks ease. Neither in walking nor in sitting nor yet in standing does he know what to do with his hands. Repose is impossible to him. So, he pulls out a cigar-case and having, after several vain attempts, at last succeeded in striking a light, he proceeds to puff his tobacco fumes even in a lady's drawing-room, and possibly in the face of the girl to whom he is making love. This he does, not only to the discomfort of the damsel, but also to the manifest danger of the theatre. Nor is smoking the only objectionable practice on the stage. The amount of eating and drinking, whether veritable or only make-believe, that goes on in modern plays may well cause grief to that sorely-tried class, "the judicious." It is not easy to understand why dramatists should so often think it necessary to introduce meals into their dramas unless it be that they desire to give the actors something to do while they are conversing. Be this as it may, certain it is that dramatic dialogue is now largely composed of

table talk. If truer attention were paid to that which Talma regarded as one of the most essential accomplishments of a player—*l'art de ne rien faire* —both cigars, and knives and forks would be in less offensive frequency upon the stage than they now are. But on both sides of the curtain Grace is a great desideratum.

THE LONDON FOG.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST.

How many and how various are the operations of the London fog! It turns day into night, extinguishes the stars, knocks the moon out of time, wraps up the sun in yellow vapours resembling mustard poultices, and envelops the city in a funeral pall. Not less strange, nor less afflicting, is its influence on the hapless sons and daughters of Adam, blinding their eyes, bewildering their brains, flying at their throats with the grasp of an invisible demon, and making the most amiable of the human race as cross as a bag of cats. Under its woful dominion the gayest spirits droop, and bad language rises to lips the most refined. I knew a Particular Baptist once, who was by no means particular in his choice of adjectives when denouncing the fog. It

is quite within the compass of belief that even a Plymouth Brother would not be more careful of his diction on the like occasion. Flesh and blood cannot stand it—that's the fact.

It was on a fifth of November, of all days in the year, that the Present Writer, coming out of the British Museum in the evening, found himself face to face with that vilest of all the guys—the Demon-Fog. In Great Russell Street, at the corner of Bedford Place, over against the statue of Charles James Fox, they had a set-to—a regular stand-up fight—in which the P. W. came off second best. It is respectfully submitted that the following poetic record of the encounter, written for the benefit of a sympathetic posterity, has at least that quality of wit which has been called the soul of it—brevity.

Of all the vile November 'Guys,'
That shock my nose and hurt my eyes,
And make me use bad language,
The vilest 'Guy' beyond compare
Is that called 'Fog,' which haunts the air;
Its ills you never *can* gauge.

I seized a knife, I made a spring,
And, dashing at the horrid thing,
Quoth I, "I'll try to stick it."
But ah! my blade was smashed in two;
It could not stab the tough Fog through;
Quoth I, "I'll try to kick it."

I only hurt my foot—alack!
With foe elusive of attack,
How hopeless then the fight is!
My lungs the Fog with vapours smote,
Sprang like a demon at my throat,
And gave me the bronchitis.

For years before that memorable conflict, and for years after, I hated and despised the fog. In my disdainful mood I was wont to say, "A fig for the fog! and a currant for care!" Towards the latter my feelings remain unaltered. Still do I loathe and scorn that cruel monster who has notoriously killed one cat, and men innumerable. But I am fain to confess that my sentiments and opinions on the subject of the 'London Particular' have undergone a change. Why should I hesitate to avow it? "When a man owns himself to have been in an error," says Pope, "he does but tell you in other words that he *is* wiser than he *was*." Superficial consideration of the matter in all its bearings has led me to the conclusion that much—very much indeed—may be said (if not proved) in favour of the London fog. It is (in the estimation of its friends) what Iago would call "a good familiar creature," and should be regarded (by those who like it) rather as a benefactor than as an enemy of the human race. Looked at from both sanitary and æsthetic points of

view it has much to recommend it. If it hurts the health in one sense, it serves it essentially in another, for, by muffling the distracting noises of the street, it lulls the ear to repose and soothes the nervous system. It hushes the uproar of multitudinous traffic, swathing the wheels of carriages in fanciful flannel, and shoeing the horses with felt like the chargers of King Lear's imaginary cavalry. While the Fog—sweet pet!—broods over the town, you cannot hear the scream of the locomotive, nor the bell of the tram-car, nor yet the drone of the bag-piper, the grinding of the organ-fiend, the blare of the trumpeter, the howl of the street-preacher, or the whistle of the butcher's boy as he drives his homicidal car madly along. The only sound you can recognize is that which comes in mellowed tones from the voices of travellers who, like so many children in the wood, have lost their way in the forest of fog. Most melancholy truly is that sound; but also most musical, which makes ample amends.

True, the fog veils from view some things lovely to behold; not less true is it that it also saves you the sight of many unwelcome objects. If you are a rich man, it spares you the contemplation of poverty, a spectacle often odious to the rich. If you are a poor man, it snatches you as in a Homeric cloud

from the terrific vision of your creditor. Say that you are shabbily clad, it matters not. The fog will clothe you as with a garment. Grant that you go about apparelled in purple and fine linen, of what avail they? Eschew vanity; pluck from the grim atmosphere the precious jewel of philosophy, and lay to heart the chastening thought that cometh a day when Lazarus and Dives will be of equal state. Then, again, consider the picturesque uses of the fog. How impressively looms through its misty medium the noble architecture of our churches, palaces, and other public edifices! Fog, the beautifier, decks them out in draperies of sombre grandeur which the returning sun will by and by reveal in enchanting contrasts of light and shade.

Nor let it be forgotten that the fog has yet another glorious office. It assures us of our nationality. Like the traveller who after wandering through many barbarous lands was suddenly comforted by the sight of a gallows, which convinced him that he had got into a civilized country at last, even so the befogged Londoner may turn his eyes upwards in search of the sun at noon-day, and failing to see it, draw from its absence proof incontrovertible that he is himself an Englishman.

THE ANGEL VANITY.

Of all the Ministering Angels that have been set over man, to lighten his burdens and make the rugged road of life endurable to his weary feet, surely the seraph Vanity is the one for whom he should be the most thankful. And yet, oh, base ingratitude! there is no expression that the human monster can utter sufficiently abusive to satisfy his rancour against his benefactress—when she also assists somebody else besides the particular individual who denounces her. It is heartrending. *There* stands the kindly, gentle Spirit, ever at Man's elbow, whispering the words of comfort and consolation, bearing healing on her wings, pouring the Balm of Gilead into all his wounds, and sweetly lulling him to repose. Is it not so? What pain or trouble will not the velvet touch of this fond Ministrant assuage? Are you in feeble health? Does not Vanity suggest sweet pity

of yourself, and tender solicitude for your own recovery? Does she not make you feel that the world, the solar system, the nubulæ of Orion, should be concerned for you, and "the sweet influence of the Pleiades" exerted in your behalf? Have your fortunes failed? Does not Vanity cajole you into the belief that you are a martyr, a precious sacrifice to the short-sightedness, the envy, and the greed of others? Or even if, in a weak moment, you acknowledge that you have nobody but yourself to thank for your tribulations, will not the Seraph remind you that few men are so noble, so honest, as to confess their faults? Are you outstripped in the race for the heiress, the gold medal, the contract, the bishopric, or the deputy-assistant headship, to whom shall you turn for solace in your affliction? Why, to Vanity, of course. She—it must be *she*, her functions are so truly feminine, so tenderly affectionate—she, I say, will show you how intrigue, impudence, or chicanery favoured your conqueror. She will never allow—bless her dear heart!—that superior capacity on the part of the rival had anything to do with your overthrow. Other causes not being forthcoming, it was fate; it was "just like your luck."

And so she will be faithful through every adverse vicissitude of life. If you resist temptation, she will

applaud you; if you succumb, she will palliate your fault. Who is perfect? Who is infallible? Is not all flesh grass? Are we not all even as the flowers of the field? Yes, she will be faithful. You may lose your love, frighten away your friends, be relieved of your relations; but Vanity will cleave to you to the last. You cannot soar too high for her wing, nor dive too deep for her lungs. She will gild the refined gold of a palace and irradiate a condemned cell. And—base ingrate that you are!—you deny her, repudiate her, and say you know her not! You will acknowledge any *liaison*, however disreputable, but hers. You confess to being wicked, but you would die rather than own to being *vain*. Nobody can say *that* of you. You have your faults; who has not?—but thank goodness you are not conceited. What, then? You are proud of your humility.

There is no denying that we now and then meet with exceptional people, who seem to be so unblessed as to be destitute of the delightful companionship of Vanity. No other persons can so much deserve our sympathy as these. Not to believe in yourself, to despise your own being, is the most woful, as it is the most unnatural, condition into which a human creature can fall. "It is as if this mouth was to tear this hand," and must be a hideous disease, rare,

and probably only temporary in the few cases that exist; for such a state of feeling, if chronic, could apparently lead to but one result. The misery of such a humour shows clearly the debt of gratitude we owe to the Angel who preserves us from it, the Angel whom we reward by ignoring her disdainfully. But unthankfulness is not the only evil begotten of our attitude towards Vanity. Consider the amount of duplicity to which it gives birth. From our earliest days we are taught that we must not be vain, for, considering that terms of ecstatic admiration are the first sounds we hear upon earth, and the only ones we hear for some considerable time, it were absurd to suppose that our parents do not want us to like ourselves a great deal; consequently, the admonitions against Vanity can only mean that we are to conceal our self-esteem, so that others may not suspect it in us. The same counsels are given to us as we grow up, and are enforced by the scorns heaped upon vanity all through our lives; but as the quality is vitally necessary, and all but universal, the code practically amounts to an obligation to hypocrisy, and what is worst of all, unsuccessful hypocrisy, for nobody ever believes that anybody has not *au fond* a good opinion of himself. This dissimulation appears to be, in a great degree, the result of over-civilization.

The savage man will vaunt his prowess in the most artless, ingenuous way. The classic conqueror painted his body red, had his captives chained to his chariot-wheels, listened with amiable self-satisfaction to the choral pæans in his honour, and naturally expected deification after death; but your latter-day saint (or sinner) deprecates praise, and ardently hopes—or would have you believe so—that he will not be deified.

Yet, curiously enough, if he only has the protection of numbers, the modern man shows a remarkable digestion in the matter of vanity. He will shout musical assertions of the pre-eminence of his native land in respect of the bravery of its sons, the beauty of its daughters, its climate, its laws, its natural conformation, with the most unblushing assurance. He will proclaim the superiority of the particular sport in which he indulges, and call upon mankind to admire people who risk their necks in pursuit of a malodorous animal they do not want, or who, nobly daring, catch little fishes. He will swagger about in the most heathenish garb; and I declare to you I once saw some Scottish gentlemen playing an outlandish game, who in the intervals of it were obliged to form a procession headed by a bag-piper, and march round to the porcine sounds of the national instrument—

and all this to relieve their self-satisfaction, and advertise their heroism to the nations! Ever so small a society is sufficient to develop vanity. Men will vaunt their county, their town, their very village, which you are surprised to find has produced a number of great personages quite out of proportion to its size. Nay, you meet representatives of families all of whose brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins, are remarkably gifted, and who modestly leave you to draw your own deductions as to their individual claims. But directly a man or woman stands alone, that person immediately becomes a model of maiden modesty. Do you doubt it? Well, I will put one question to you. I will throw down my glove to all mankind—all mankind worth considering—that is to say, the readers of this Book. Perpend! Pronounce! Is there a human being who will acknowledge that he thinks well enough of himself! Silent, all! It follows, then, that if you do not think well enough of yourself, you must believe you are better than you think you are, and if that is not Vanity, "take away the fool," meaning myself, of course.

But let us not take too harsh a view of the question. What you have done is really praiseworthy. Admiration of yourself leads, naturally, to the desire that others should admire you—not equally (that, I fear,

cannot be hoped for), yet heartily; and if others admire, they are gratified, pleased, or even delighted; and thus you have increased the happiness of mankind. See the dainty damsel before her sweet counsellor, the looking-glass. I do not know, of course, the initial processes of her toilette; but in my mind's eye I see her deft and shapely hands hovering gracefully about her comely form, fitting, adjusting, smoothing, patting, pushing, twining, and performing a thousand feats of legerdemain, while she undulates in sinuous curves, and the mobile, graceful head, upon her sweeping, swan-like neck, surveys, now sideways, now backwards, now in full-front, that master-piece of nature and art which she has seen ten thousand times before, and never tires of seeing. Shall we blame you, O *carissima puella!* for that placid regard, for that longing, lingering look behind, that precedes your radiant sortie? No, certainly not, for do we not reap the advantage of your self-satisfaction, and share the harvest of your ingenious toil? Behold the gallant youth! How glossy is his hat! His boots, how spruce and shiny! Mark his coat! It is fearfully and wonderfully made. Consider the symmetry of his trousers! His button-hole flower sheds perfume on the breeze; the hairs of his moustache are cunningly twisted. Lo! he lifts his hat to a

lady. How stern the regularity of his parting! How gracefully falls his fringe! *O puer ingenue!* Ah! blame not the look he casts at the plate-glass windows of the shops! *We* can see and admire him. Why should we deny *him* a similar pleasure? If these happy people were not on good terms with themselves, she, perchance, would be a s'attern, he a scarecrow; or they would "wear their rue with a difference," distinctly to be felt.

It may be said that there is not so much objection to people who value themselves on qualities that they do possess, as to those who appear satisfied in a deficiency. Why, they are the most laudable of all. To manfully or womanfully struggle against adverse fate is surely an effort to be admired above all things; while contentment with little, and an attempt to make the most of that little, is the advice of all the sages who have ever lived since the world began. It is no credit to a millionaire to be satisfied with Fortune, but for a beggar to accept his position pleasantly, and to endeavour to wear his rags with the best possible grace, bespeaks a tone of feeling that we can scarcely honour too much. Every one has noticed the bravery of attire, the tendency to perhaps somewhat excessive adornment, of the unfortunates whom—forgive me, ye helpless ones!—

the world calls 'cripples' and 'hunchbacks.' What can be more eloquent, what more touching? Make their case your own. Consider what it is to be singled out from the race of men for distortion and impotence; to see the comely creatures of your kind move freely, with limbs of rhythmic precision and uncurbed pride of port, and to know that you are doomed to shrunken, shapeless members, a bowed form; that the fair inheritance of others is for you a wreck and ruin for ever! Can we wonder that these sad sons and daughters of physical affliction should endeavour to conceal their cruel isolation, and try, however hopelessly, to efface their mournful distinction? Poor stricken ones! Heaven forbid we should deride your sometimes gay attire, should not assist you in cheerfully appearing to ignore that ye are not as others are! Who knows what bitter sense of injustice and wrong you are bravely trying to conceal and crush?

It is strange that Humanity usually values itself more upon qualities acquired by accident, than upon those attained by effort or application. Beauty, rank and valour are more potent to produce self-gratulation than are wisdom, virtue, and amiability. Nor is the cause far to seek. A pretty face, a title, a reputation for being dangerous, naturally appeal most powerfully

to the human mind, as representing three master-passions—Love, Pride, and Fear, and the possessor of any one of these gifts is certainly within his right in appreciating them. Now Wisdom, Virtue and Amiability are, of course, noble things; but, whether the market is overstocked with them, or for what other reason, they are not exactly negotiable; and it is hardly worth while now-a-days to possess a thing, unless you can get something for it. Even Madame de Staël, in the zenith of her social and literary reputation, confessed that she would be glad to barter it all for the fair face of a young beauty—and methinks her case is not singular among her Sex. Indeed, I believe every lady would, above all things, prefer to be a beauty. They are all beautiful, of course; only, they would like to be more so, for which, considering that it is only for our sakes, we cannot be too grateful.

In pleading the cause of the maligned virtue of Self-Esteem, it should be pointed out that it is so hardy a plant, as to be able to grow without any soil at all. There will rarely be found a character destitute of a few grains of earth in which it may root itself. Figuratively speaking, an ear or an eyelash is quite sufficient for its support. Intellectually, everything—morally, anything—brings it within the

reach of everybody; and as everybody grows it, I affirm that it would be far more honest for the world to place it in their front-parlour windows, instead of hiding it in the cellar.

O misprized Angel of Vanity, do thou continue to comfort and befriend us! Withdraw not from us the light of thy benignant countenance, and let what may befall us, grant us, in Caledonian phrase, that richest of all earthly blessings, "a gude conceit o' oursels." We don't want to see ourselves as others see us, but rather as thy prismatic pencil paints us, and with that picture perpetually before us, we shall need no other portrait.

PEOPLE WHO WON'T GIVE IN.

My blessing on them! They *do* give such grace and dignity to life, and make the world so comfortable! Always be positive! Having put down your foot, keep it there till it suits your purpose to take it up. Having said a thing, stick to it. Take for your maxim "Frangi, non flecti," "I will break rather than bend." Be an oak of the forest, not a reed of the desert. What though the storm should destroy you, by reason of your inflexibility, who cares? Is it not better to perish heroically, in steadfast adherence to that which you have once uttered or written, than to sway with every breeze like an insensate weathercock? I hate a man who vacillates. Give me the man who, come what may, will never 'cave in.' If you would respect the dignity of the human race, as concentrated in your own person, be impervious to argument, inaccessible

to reason, and never, O never let it be said that you have been put down by common-sense. Any poor creature may be so conquered. Be it your noblest boast, that the most eloquent appeals of learning and the most obvious deductions of logic fall upon your mind even as snow-flakes upon the sea. If by some calamitous combination of circumstances you should have to give an apparent assent to any particular proposition—such, for example, as that the moon is *not* made of green cheese, though you had maintained that it *is*—let your assent be purely verbal. Let not your indomitable spirit capitulate, even though your tongue should be compelled to do so. "He who complies against his will, is of the same opinion still." But if you will stand by your guns, fight Echo for the last word, and give your enemies to comprehend that though the sky should fall for it, you will never give in, the chances are a thousand to one they will leave you alone. Take for your model Goldsmith's 'Village Schoolmaster,' to whose immortal renown it is recorded that—

"In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished he could argue still."

A true hero that, though he fought on the field of

disputation, not on the blood-stained plain of Mars, nor yet upon seas incarnadined with human gore. Even there the triumphs of obstinacy are glorious and indisputable. What makes the British soldier and the British sailor alike invincible? Is it not that the former never knows when he is beaten, and that the latter never says 'die' while there is a shot in the locker? Neither ever gives in, and therefore it is that both are unconquerable.

But, saving only in the matter of war, it is humiliating to think how little fixity of purpose, and consequently, how little true courage, are to be found among men. Therein, as indeed in all other respects, women are immeasurably our superiors. Upon the tented field man will fight like a devil, eat his enemy's heart, and kill his fellow-men remorselessly, for any or no cause, but in the affairs of everyday life he is a pitiful craven. Man pulls down his flag upon the slightest pretence; woman nails her colours to the mast. Man takes 'No' for a refusal; woman interprets it for assent. With woman there is no negative; 'Yes' and 'No' are equally in the affirmative. Man sees obstacles, and is terrified; woman sees them, but only to scorn them; she flies over them like a bird; like the bird of paradise she is. Man hesitates, falters,

stutters, stammers, changes his opinions like his clothes; woman is immutable as truth, whereof she is the only earthly exponent. Sings not the poet thus?—

> "Weak and irresolute is *man*,
> The martyr of to-day,
> For ever weaving plot and plan
> To-morrow melts away."

Just so. It is man, and man alone, who is weak and irresolute. No one has ever dared to attribute any such character to woman. The reason why woman never gives in is, that she is always in the right; the reason why man is perpetually giving in is, that he is invariably in the wrong. 'Anything for a quiet life" is the ignoble principle of ninety-nine men out of a hundred. "No surrender!" is the motto of the sex. "The man," says Goldsmith, "who examines a complicated subject on every side and calls in reason to his assistance, will frequently change, will find himself distracted by opposing probabilities and contending proofs; every alteration of place will diversify the prospect, will give some latent argument new force, and contribute to maintain an anarchy in the mind." Very true; but be it remembered that this is written of *man*, not of woman. It is man alone who

reasons. Being fallible, he needs must reason. Not so woman. She never reasons. Why should she? There is no reason why she should reason. It were most unreasonable to ask her to reason. *Il n'y a pas pourqui.* She is infallible. What, then, should she have to do with the processes of ratiocination? It is because she is always and everywhere in the right that she can afford to be unwaveringly consistent. Therefore it is that—

"The man's a fool who tries by force or skill
To stem the torrent of a woman's will;
For if she will, she will, you may depend on't,
And if she won't, she won't, and there's an end on't."

And quite right, too. The torrent of a woman's will is the torrent of truth, the majestic, irresistible tide of justice and common-sense, sweeping all error and humbug before it. Talk of the torrent of a man's will. As well might you talk of the torrent of a tea-cup. What the fountains in Trafalgar Square are to the Falls of Niagara, what a cockle-shell is to an ironclad, what the hyssop upon the wall is to the cedars of Lebanon, even such is the will of man to the will of woman.

It is worthy of remark, as a fact psychologically distinctive of the sexes, that whereas women glory

in obstinacy—as well, indeed, they may—men are ashamed of it, the recreants! Nicely observant of this curious fact, Charles Dickens gives an amusing illustration of it in a conversation between Martin Chuzzlewit and Tom Pinch:—"'Now, you must bear in mind, Pinch, that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined ——' —'*Obstinacy,*' suggested Tom, in perfect good faith. But the suggestion was not so well received as he had expected, for the young man immediately rejoined, with some irritation, 'What a fellow you are, Pinch!'—'I beg your pardon,' said Tom, 'I thought you wanted a word.'—'I didn't want *that* word,' he rejoined; 'I told you obstinacy was no part of my character, did I not? I was going to say, if you had given me leave, that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined firmness.'—'Oh!' cried Tom, screwing up his mouth, and nodding, 'yes, yes; I see.'—'And being firm,' pursued Martin, 'of course I was not going to yield to him, or give way by so much as the thousandth part of an inch'—'No, no,' said Tom;—'on the contrary, the more he urged, the more I was determined to oppose him.'—'To be sure,' said Tom.—'Very well,' rejoined Martin, throwing himself back in his chair,

as if the subject were quite settled, and nothing more could be said about it; 'there is an end of the matter, and here am I.'" Martin, you see, was as obstinate as a mule; but instead of being proud of it, he was ashamed of it, which proved the degeneracy of his nature.

It is wonderful beyond belief to think what marvels may be accomplished by dint of incessant iteration, whether of deeds or words. People who won't give in get their own way at last, and sooner or later achieve the object of their ambition, be it what it may. It is the dun who is paid; the patient creditor goes to the workhouse. The man or woman who can talk a dog's hind leg off, as the old saying goes, wins all the gain and glory legitimately belonging to that singular surgical operation. What an old woman Cato must have been, to be sure! "Delenda est Carthago!" "Carthage must be destroyed"—was everlastingly on the tip of his tongue and of his pen. With these words he began and ended every letter and every conversation. On sea and shore, by day and by night, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in gladness, he was evermore singing the same unvarying song—"Delenda est Carthago"—"Carthage must be destroyed," till at last, by Jove,

Carthage *was* destroyed, and that, too, as effectually as though it had never existed. So much for perseverance, which will take a snail from Piccadilly to Palmyra. "Multis ictibus dejicitur quercus"—"By multitudinous blows the oak is laid prostrate." "Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed saepe cadendo"—"Not by force, but by frequency, the drop penetrates the stone," as you may ascertain for yourself, by dropping water slowly out of a kettle-spout upon a block of marble, until a hole is worn through the latter. Hotspur understood the value of this policy—

> "Speak of Mortimer!
> Zounds, I *will* speak of him. . . .
> He said he would not ransom Mortimer,
> Forbad my tongue to speak of Mortimer,
> But I will find him when he is asleep,
> And in his ear I'll holloa, 'Mortimer!'
> Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak
> Nothing but 'Mortimer,' and give it him
> To keep his anger still in motion."

Of a verity, WILLIAM knew the human heart, and turned his knowledge to good account.

In the Greco-Roman mythology, Obstinacy was a goddess, and passed for the daughter of Night. She was represented in the likeness of a woman, wearing

the ears of an ass and shutting her eyes not to see. In other representations she had a nail driven through the back of her head, carried in her hand a burning brazier, and wore the head of an ass or a mule. This only shows, sweet reader! how the noblest natures may be slandered, reviled, and misunderstood. But be not you deceived. Whether you are right or wrong, stick to it; never give in! Much, to be sure, has been said and written before now in praise of gentleness and amiability, but the day for such silly sentimentalism is gone, to return no more. True, the gentle and the amiable, the meek and the forgiving, are loved in life and mourned in death; but what of that? "Si nous voulons être regrettés, soyons doux"—"If we would be regretted, let us be gentle,' wrote Châteaubriand; but it is mere sophistry. Who wants to be regretted? Why should any one look the gladder for your coming, or the sadder for your going? Why should any one watch you with loving eyes while living or bless your memory in death? Why should flowers be strewn upon your coffin, or tears be shed upon your grave? These are the tributes offered to the kind, the amiable, the meek and lowly of heart, whose names are in benediction for evermore, and whose memory "smells sweet and

blossoms in the dust." Out upon such folly! The loyalty of friendship, the fond solicitude of love, the tender reminiscences of your family, the golden opinions of the world—what are they all, compared to the glory of having your own way? Never give in!

THE DEGENERACY OF DIALOGUE.

THAT Degeneracy of Dialogue which is observable in real life, and as a natural consequence on the stage also, is probably the joint effect of many and various causes. Of these, the most important are the universal ambition to be witty, the unconscionable loquacity of men, the lamentable taciturnity of women, the inordinate frequency of allusions to the weather, the use of highly-coloured adjectives and adverbs, and the run upon pet words and fashionable phrases. The first of these evils is beyond doubt the most pernicious. It is the death of good talk, and of good fellowship as well.

Said a French Curé once to his rural congregation—"To-day, my dearly beloved Brethren, I propose to speak to you about Pride. There are three sorts—pride of birth, pride of fortune, and pride of intellect. I don't intend to make the

slightest reference to the last, for I am certain that no one amongst you has ever been guilty of *that* sin." Happy congregation! And happy, thrice happy, he whose lot it was to dwell in their midst!

O, for the sight of a dull man! "Look in the glass," you say. Many thanks. I often do so, and bless my moon (stars I have none) that I there behold Dulness in perfection. But a man cannot be always looking in the glass. Besides, even in the matter of dullards variety is pleasing. "Odsbodikins and Gadzooks!" as Queen Elizabeth, of more or less vestal memory, was wont to exclaim, can it be that there is but one dull man within the four seas of England? Does the Present Writer concentrate and monopolize in his own person the stupidity of the island? If not, where is the other fellow? Surely there must be two of us. An ass! an ass! my Kingdom for an ass!

"Some people," says Pope, "are wits all over, to that degree that they are fools all over. They are wits in the church, wits in the street, wits at a funeral." It is the ubiquity of these so-called wits, and the incessancy of their labours Sysiphean to make good their right to the name, that make us hate the sight of them, and long for the appearance of some honest dunce who would oblige the company

either with a stupid saying, or, better still, a "brilliant flash of silence." In classic times the conversational interests of society were governed by wiser laws than those which obtain amid the much-vaunted civilization of modern days. The words 'Attic' and 'Atticism,' still applied to all that is most polite in manners, most refined in sentiment, and most delicate in diction, had original reference to those Athenian banquets, where the guests delighted to discourse upon philosophy, poetry, music, and art. Hence Plato was well content to give the title, 'The Banquet,' to one of the most elegant and erudite of his Dialogues. In the estimation of the Greeks, Conversation was a Republic, where all sojourners had equal suffrage, each being expected to contribute, in the proportion of his ability, to the common fund of learning, eloquence, and 'wit' worthy of the name. How utterly ruinous to the realization of that happy design is the silly attempt, prosecuted with the same undiscerning pertinacity, whether in or out of season, to say something funny! What can be more disheartening, more humiliating, than that every one, in a large circle of talkers, should be simultaneously intent upon the same object, and that object simply to raise a laugh? This plague of wit kills all joy. It plays the mischief with

the mental digestion. It is like dining upon pickles.

Nor can it be doubted that that brooding melancholy, which seems to grow darker and deeper with each successive generation of Englishmen, is in great degree attributable to their everlasting efforts after wit. What a poignant sarcasm is that which Shakspere has put into the mouth of Beatrice, comparing Benedict to the Prince's jester, who was "duller than a great thaw." "I dread nothing in this world so much," said Madame de Sevigné, "as the company of a man who is witty every day in the year." Not less wise was the testimony of Voltaire—"Good writers and good talkers have no more wit than they want; *and they never go in search of it.*" Aye, there's the rub. That is precisely what everybody is doing now-a-days. The quality of wit, like that of mercy, is not strained. In its freshness and spontaneity dwells its only charm. If we go to our wit, instead of suffering our wit to come to us, the result is weariness and vexation of spirit. This was, to use Falstaff's phrase, the 'spoil' of Mr. H. J. Byron's comedies, in which subtle characterization and dramatic treatment of incident and adventure were too often subordinated to the comic exigencies of a dialogue overflowing with drollery.

Viewing from the summit of Olympus the proceedings of us perishing mortals, the gods see many a pitiful sight, but rarely a sight more pitiful than that of a man leading up to his fun, and laboriously turning awry the current of sensible discourse that he may stoop to the verbal turpitude of a pun, or indulge in some preposterous contrast between the sound and the sense of words. And the worst of it is, that this convulsive straining after wit inevitably culminates in ill-nature. After Gossip has had its ignoble say, and the Chatterers can no longer extract merriment from "that abominable tittle-tattle which is the cud that's chewed by human cattle," Scandal comes in, and, after Scandal, Slander, for people must have their laugh, though domestic peace be destroyed, and private honour die for it.

Wit, even of the best quality, should be occasional, not continuous. Such is the analogy of Nature. There is no storm without a lull, no tide without a retiring ebb. Not always is the sun shining; not always are the birds singing. Coming with 'sudden glory' on the affluent and unbidden inspiration of the moment, wit is delightful—is enchanting; but smacking of preparedness, it is no better than playhouse thunder. Rightly used, it gives to stage-talk, as to table-talk, joyous grace and brilliant spirit.

With an elegance of sentiment and a felicity of expression all his own has Rousseau described the quality of good conversation—"Le ton de la bonne conversation est coulant et naturel, il est ni pesant ni frivole; il est savant sans pédanterie, gai sans tumulte, poli sans affectation, galant sans fadeur, badin sans équivoque. Ce ne sont ni des dissertations ni des épigrammes; on y raisonne sans argumenter; on y plaisante sans jeux de mots; on y assaisonne avec art, l'esprit, et la raison, les maximes et les saillies, l'ingénieuse raillerie et la moralé austère." Whether in real life, or in its mimic representation on the stage, no conversation which does not fulfil these conditions has just claim upon the attention of a cultivated audience.

Man born of a Woman (or howsoever otherwise descended) is no great honour to his mother. It is not by his doings alone, but by his sayings also, that he causes perpetual anxiety to a parent who has at heart her own dignity and that of her offspring as well. No exaggeration is it, but the simple truth, to assert that it would not matter one fig—no, not one currant—though nine-tenths of what is spoken by the superfluous sex were never uttered. With women the case is different. The pearls of wisdom, the diamonds of wit falling from the lips of Beauty

are, indeed, priceless. So thought the Duchesse du Maine, and that was, no doubt, the reason why she took such delight in what she was pleased to call 'Conversation'—"I love conversation," said that charming gentlewoman, "because everybody listens to me, and I listen to nobody." Quite so. Never were cause and effect more accurately adjusted. But such ladies as the Duchesse are rare indeed. If men would talk less and women more, we should not have such occasion to deplore the degeneracy of dialogue.

THE ASS.

In order to prevent any misconception about the subject of this essay, let me state at once, and most emphatically, that it is *not* an autobiography, but merely a sketch of a familiar yet extraordinary quadruped. Let me at the same time assure you that my most intimate acquaintances consider me a thoroughly trustworthy authority on asses, and even my enemy is forced to confess that I instinctively know an ass when I see one—in a mirror; but that is a mere detail. The origin of the great Edward family is wrapped in fascinating but impenetrable mystery. Even Darwin shrinks from hazarding any solution of the bewildering problem when and how the ass was 'evoluted.' Neddy is not mentioned among the animals in the Garden of Eden. In fact his boisterous tones and violent language would have sadly marred the idyllic calm of Paradise. Neither is his name included in the list of the 'real original

menagerie' of Noah. Even geologists do not encourage us to believe that any mammoth Moke ever adorned the damp solitudes of the primæval world. The philosophical investigator is therefore compelled either to adopt Topsy's theory—"I specks he growed"—or else to cling to the opinion that the Edwards, like many other swells, "came over with the Conqueror." The latter conjecture seems at least to be plausible, for history records that the Spanish conquest of Mexico and Peru was largely facilitated by the terror with which the sight of Castilian 'night-mares' inspired the natives. But nobody can possibly deny that a donkey—remember the Ass of Silenus which, by lifting up its voice, immediately routed a whole host of classical giants—is a far more weird and gruesome apparition; especially when he raises "the Pibroch of his race, the Song without a Tune." (Some etymologists even assert that 'donkey' is derived from a Low Dutch word signifying 'gloom.') So the first appearance of Edward in William's company on English soil would fully account for the panic of the Saxons at Hastings.

Reverting to the history of my hero, I regret to admit that from the very first his merits have never been universally recognized. Some at least of the

ancient Egyptians regarded Cuddy as the emblem of misfortune, and they represented Typhon—the principle of evil—as ass-headed; not because all sin is asinine, but chiefly for the reason that the ass was their satirical symbol for their Assyrian enemies. It was a maxim among the Romans also "to say nothing good of an ass till he was dead," and, if they met a defunct one, they considered it a very bad omen indeed. Even in their proverbs they showed their contempt; *asinus in tegulis*, signifying "a rum un to look at," while *asinus ad lyram* may be considered equivalent to our "bull in a china shop." The Greeks, too, characterized all frivolous arguments about trivialities as disputes *peri onou skias*—about the shadow of an ass—a saying possibly derived from the following fable of old Æsop:—A youth, one hot summer's day, hired an ass to carry him from Athens to Megara, and dismounting at noon was about to repose himself in the shadow of the beast whose driver, however, objected. "What!" quoth the youth, "did I not hire the ass for the whole journey?" "Yes," said the other, "you hired the ass, but not the ass's shadow." While they were wrangling thus, the ass ran away. The obvious moral of this edifying fable is that Nature never intended the ass for a parasol.

There are also many comparatively modern adages which wantonly insult dear old Neddy. Jacques Bonhomme characterizes bankruptcy as "mounting the ass," and we ourselves describe a man in the sulks as "riding the black donkey." In fact, no philosopher can fail to realize how intensely asinine are many of the characteristics of humanity, or how very human, in many respects, is the ass. I remember a very remarkable echo near Oberwesel, on the Rhine, which gives important evidence in favour of the theory. The tourist is instructed to bawl at the top of his voice, "What is the burgomaster of Oberwesel?" Instantly the voice of mother earth replies 'Esel,' an ass.

As further proof that there is something of the ass in every man, this curious fact may be adduced. In Southern Africa there is a fly called the *tsetse*, whose bite is fatal to oxen and horses, but perfectly innocuous to asses—and men.

Believe me, that, when comparing ourselves with Edward,

> "We carp at faults with bitter speech,
> The while for one unshared by each,
> We have a score in common."

Moreover, it is desirable to remember that Ned, had he mastered English, might have availed himself

with crushing effect of the remark of the criminal who, when condemned by a prosy old judge to considerable hard labour, interrupted the judicial summing up with, "Well, after all, I'm not such an ass as your lordship"—then adding after a sly pause—"thinks I am!"

It is, however, comforting, and cannot fail to give me personal gratification to find, that mankind has been almost as liberal in its praise as in its condemnation of the ass. Even the Greeks admitted the claims of Edward as a benefactor of the human race, inasmuch as he—by browsing on the tendrils of a vine—first taught them the art of pruning. So they erected a marble statue in his honour at Nauplia. Therefore, my beloved critic, you will admit that I need never despair of the gratitude of the public. Even in the Egypt of to-day it is said that the sect of the Ahmediyeh worship the donkey—an adoration "which, strange as it seems, is one of the oldest cults of Asia, and is stated still to exist among the Anseiriyeh, north of Lebanon."

Apart from the ethical claims of the ass, the civilized world acknowledges—perhaps unconsciously—his virtues as an edible. The Persians and Tartars, and even the Romans, esteemed the roasted haunch of the wild ass among the daintiest of dishes, but

perhaps few people are aware how largely the jackass of modern days contributes towards the sausages of Boulogne and Lyons. It is said that Lyonnese and Bolognese, coming to London, have been known to rush to the city—to Ironmonger Lane—to extend their acquaintance with the good little beast. They misunderstood the name of the street, reading it *Irons manger l'âne.* The song of the Ass is not without its musical properties; far otherwise, but, however useful as a serenade it is worthless as a lullaby. It does not induce sleep. No; regarded in the light of a living soporific, the ass is, in my opinion, an utter failure. He is not "built that way." You see, his voice is against his success in that line. His bray is a perfect study—a wild savage pæan. Just mark him, as, planting his legs firmly and laying his ears back, he elevates his nose skywards, and pours forth in rich crescendo volume the music of the future, his "songs without words." "Hee! Haw!"—the *hee*, a high clear falsetto; the *haw*, a rumbling, thunderous bass. Doubtless his ears have been specially constructed for the proper and full enjoyment of melodies, which, to our less perfectly developed *tympana*, seem the very standard of cacophony. Nevertheless, it is possible that a whole system of harmonics may, as science advances, be discovered in his bray—con-

cerning which there is considerable difference of opinion. Mohammed, for instance, very naïvely remarks in the *Koran* that "the most ungrateful of all voices surely is the voice of asses," albeit he admits the virtuous ass of Esdras, and (I believe) the ass of Balaam, into the Moslem Paradise. On the other hand, there is set forth in that treatise on the *Noblenesse of the Asse*, the theory "that the goodly, sweet, and continual brayings of the Asse forme a melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke, full of exceeding pleasure to be heard; because therein is to be discerned both concord, discord, singing in the meane, in large compasse, then following into rise and fall, the halfe-note, the whole note, musicke of five voices, four, three, or one and a-halfe—a song of world without end." An opinion which Coleridge seems to share, for in his *Ode to a Young Ass* he exclaims—

> "More musically sweet to me
> Thy dissonant harsh bray of joy would be,
> Than warbled melodies that soothe to rest
> The aching of pale fashion's vacant breast!"

An imputation of asinine qualities to a man sometimes lead to comic results. What a pleasant little story is that told about a couple of church-wardens and a country parson! The wardens so far

forgot themselves as to quarrel one day in the very presence of his reverence. In fact one of them absolutely shouted at the top of his voice to the other, "Sir, you are *without exception* the biggest ass I have ever seen or heard of"; whereupon the scandalized parson rose from his chair with great dignity, exclaiming in accents of reproach and annoyance, "Really, gentlemen, you quite seem to forget that *I* am present." Tableau!

But *chantons d'autre Bernart.* Through centuries of oppression and ill-usage at the hands of those he serves so faithfully, the ass has ever been distinguished above all other animals by one of the grandest characteristics of true genius—the power of patient endurance. His natural firmness—call it not obstinacy—and his pachydermatous hide have enabled him to disregard "the proud man's contumely" and the coster's cudgel; and when he once really makes up his mind, everybody knows that the universe might crumble into chaos before he would change his fixed purpose. There is, too, something colossal, sphinx-like, in a self-complacency, a calm assurance, which no insult can ruffle, no honours augment. He was equal to taking the leading *rôle* in the festivals of chaste Vesta, on the altars of Mars, and in the revels of gay Dionysos and drunken old

Silenus. Just study his skull if you believe in the science of phrenology—and what ass does not? Mark how vast are the bumps of philoprogenitiveness, alimentiveness, music, approbativeness. Yet he is derisively portrayed—in the guise of Buridan's Ass—as the picture of indecision between two bundles of hay; and we smile compassionately at Edward's folly in pursuing at full gallop the bunch of carrots tied to a stick held in front of his expectant lips by the artful coster in the cart behind. We laugh, poor fools, as though we ourselves were not always chasing unattainable carrots through the thoroughfares of life. All my readers of the male sex will, I fancy, admit that at some period or other of their lives they have made asses of themselves.

But besides the fellow-creature who occasionally makes an ass of himself—as witness this essay—there is also the man who is made an ass of by lovely woman. Her influence in the manufacture of human 'Neddies' is perfectly marvellous. She first tickles her victim with the thistles of simulated indifference, then cajoles him with the sweet clover of flattery, and presto! in the twinkling of an eye, she has slipped the matrimonial yoke over his long ears. Bachelors, by the way, should read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest that highly

edifying anecdote in Rabelais about the ass of Panurge.

Nevertheless, I own that there is the tenderest pathos in that scene in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where Titania's exquisite grace is contrasted with the uncouth object of her passion. Not a man living ever dreams that he is the Bottom of his domestic hearth: selfish, gross, unlovable, heedless of a devotion which encircles his foolish ears "with coronets of fresh and fragrant flowers." "The immortal weaver of Athens," says Douglas Jerrold, "hath a host of descendants; they are scattered throughout every country of the world, their moral likeness to their sage ancestor becoming stronger in the land of luxury and wealth." Yes, there is many a Midas who wears a Phrygian cap in vain.

Truly the value of the ass to the moralist and satirist is simply inestimable. From time immemorial, long before the Vedic myths and the fables of Æsop, long before the Golden Ass of Apuleius, the moke has pointed the morals and adorned the tales of hoar antiquity. I should have liked to dilate on Lucius of Corinth, on the 'assinego' of Thersites, on the 'Bricklebrit' and 'Donkey Cabbages' of Grimm, on the ass of the *Arabian Nights*, on 'The

Fakenham Ghost' of Bloomfield, on the still more appalling Mazikeen Ass, on the 'Prose of the Ass' in the Festival of Fools, on Sancho Panza's Dapple, on Dogberry's wish, on Elia's jests, on Dickens' donkeys—in short, "de asinis omnibus et quibusdam aliis." But I have not the patience of Lawrence Sterne, who declares that "with an ass he could commune for ever."

THE PLEASURES OF DISCONTENT.

A DISCONTENTED mind is a continual feast. Manifestly; else there would not be so many discontented minds among the human race. It is only Man and his wife, Woman, who are privileged to partake the perennial banquet. All the higher animals, whether they swim in the sea, fly in the air, or walk on the earth, are well pleased with their respective lots and pursuits. At least we have no reason to conclude that they are not so. They have never said or done anything to warrant the opposite belief. Horace, to be sure, has taken upon himself to affirm that they are envious one of another—that the ox longs for the trappings of the charger, and that the charger had rather draw a plough than a war-chariot; but there is not a particle of evidence to substantiate these impudent assertions. They are of a piece with the usual untruthfulness of our

dealings with beings who never told, will never tell, a lie, which is more than they can say of us. We are always attributing to our fellow-creatures who graze the verdant plains our own ignoble passions; as who should say to a sot not to make a beast of himself with drink; a thing that a beast would scorn to do. If a man were to make a beast of himself he would be sober and respectable. To warn a horse against intemperance (a needless caution) we should exhort him not to make a man of himself. Anxious indeed and heavy of heart would oxen be, could they but fathom the depth of our malice in their regard. A Roman satirist tells us of a fellow who had the baseness to dine off the sheep from whose wool he had made him a coat. Nor was this a solitary case. I know a man at Tunbridge Wells—a parson too of all men in the world—who has been guilty of a like enormity. He told me so himself. Of this sort of perfidy on our part the generous flocks and herds have not the least suspicion. Unlike the guilty lords of creation, they enjoy to-day. No remorse for lost opportunities embitters the memory of yesterday; no presentiment of beef and mutton casts a dark shadow on the morrow. Visions of broadcloth haunt them not; nor have they any notion of what materials boots and shoes are made. They are

ignorant and happy; while Man is wise and miserable. And here be it remembered that Man embraces Woman. He does so frequently in grammar; and in real life as often as he has the chance.

Yes; it is true beyond all question that discontent is the distinctive prerogative of humanity. Man has been variously described as a laughing, a clothes-wearing, and a cooking animal. Besides all these he is, exceptionally among all created beings, a grumbling animal. So many are the grumblers, that they may be regarded as mainly representative of the whole human family. There are, peradventure, a handful of contented people on earth; but what are they but a paltry pitiful lot, meanly unmindful of the first duty and the highest privilege of their race? Shall it be said that a man with good health and plenty of money ought to be contented? Odds rabbit, no! He would be no better than a cow in a clover-field. Leave her to crop her fragrant meal, the lambkin to gambol on the lea, the lark to sing at heaven's gate, and man to enjoy the peculiar music of mankind—a growl.

What is amusingly remarkable about human beings is that, though doomed *ab initio* to be dissatisfied, they spend all the days and nights of their lives in the pursuit of satisfaction. For this are they willing

to incur dangers the most deadly, and to endure hardships the most humiliating. For this will they let Eurus stab them to the lungs on their way to play-house or ball-room; for this will they roam the wide world over, embark in the wildest enterprises, get drunk, get married, and defy all the dictates of common sense. Of the many comical devices to which men formerly had recourse in their hunt after the phantom 'content,' not the least laughable was the practice of duelling. To get out of a warm comfortable bed at the dawn of a raw cold morning, may-be in mid-winter, and to repair shiveringly to Chalk Farm—a dark, hideous place, where chalk is unknown and farm there is none—there to shoot another man dead, or to be shot by him, was assuredly as strange a method of either exacting or affording "the satisfaction due from one gentleman to another" as ever occurred to the moon-struck fancy of a Bedlamite. "In this connection," as our Columbian cousins are wont to say, let me narrate a pleasant little anecdote which I remember to have heard or read somewhere of Charles Incledon, the celebrated singer, a gentleman not less dear to Bacchus than to Apollo. One night when he was enjoying his glass with certain boon-companions from the theatre, in the cosy bar-parlour of the 'White Horse,' the inn at

which he always put up when visiting Norwich, there chanced to come in a young cornet of yeomanry, resplendent in his newly-donned uniform. Incledon, who loved a joke at whatever cost to good manners, winked at his comrades, and began to talk contemptuously about feather-bed soldiers. "Do you mean that allusion for *me*, sir?" asked the martial yeoman. "You may construe it as you like, sir," replied the uncivil King of Baritones. "You are drunk now, sir," rejoined the indignant officer, "but to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, when perhaps you may be in your senses, I will call upon you and demand the satisfaction due from one gentleman to another." And off he went in a towering passion. True to the hour, he presented himself next day at the hostelry, and walking straight into Incledon's bedroom found him fast asleep with a crimson night-cap on his head. He shook him rudely. "Halloa!" exclaimed the awakened man. "Who are you? and what do you want?" The yeoman explained. He was the gentleman who had been insulted last night in the bar-parlour, and he had come for the satisfaction due, &c. &c. "Satisfaction, my boy!" echoed the singer, "you shall have it." So saying he sat up in the bed, and having tucked the blankets tightly around him, proceeded without

more a-do to sing 'The Bay of Biscay,' in his own matchless style. The people of the inn flocked up and listened with delight. "THERE, my good fellow," said the singer triumphantly when his song was done, —and so saying he waved his red nightcap in the air —"THAT has given satisfaction to thousands, and if it does not give satisfaction to *you*, I am sorry for you, for I have nothing better to offer. Let us shake hands." The cornet good-humouredly complied, and went on his way in much better case than he would have done had he either given or received an ounce of lead.

Racy of his native soil is the exquisite saying of Sir Lucius O'Trigger, "Come now: I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content." The notion that the ranks of the contented should be filled with the dissatisfied is delightfully Irish. Yet when one comes to think of it, how otherwise should they be filled in a world where satisfaction is unknown? Seriously examined, the bull is not quite so absurd as at the first blush it would seem to be. That dissatisfaction is man's normal condition is proved by many things, but by nothing more conclusively than by his inability to satisfy himself. For my own poor part, I am free to confess that when I consider how often I am dissatisfied with myself, I

cease to wonder why other people should be so. Indeed I can safely defy my enemy to prove that I am a self-satisfied man.

To reprove discontent, the ancients feigned that in Tartarus stood a man twisting a rope of hay; and still he twisted on, suffering an ass to eat up all that was completed. Of men and asses like unto these there are countless multitudes in this sublunary planet. We are all discontented. In every lute there is a rift, to quote a poetic but over-worked metaphor; in every drum there is a hole, to speak in home-spun prose. Dissatisfaction is the inheritance of our race. We come into the world crying; and every day's experience of it but goes to prove what good reason we had for our tears. Being a man or a woman you must be dissatisfied. The only alternative is that suggested by Iago—to exchange your humanity with a baboon; but where are you to find the baboon who would be a party to any such transaction? Baboons know better. They are wiser in their generation than their melancholy descendants.

Returning to our text, let us frankly avow that on the score of felicity, "our being's end and aim," something is to be said after all in favour of discontent. Something! Very much indeed. What can be more insipid, more monotonous than contentment? The

life of a contented man (if any such there be) is a tideless sea, say rather a Dutch canal. There is no scenery in his sky. It is a cold, colourless, inexpressive dome, without the picturesque drapery of clouds, and without the dramatic passion that comes of a storm. A deathlike silence and a dread repose pervade his inanimate destiny. The discontented man, on the contrary, is incessantly on the *qui vive*. How variegated is his pursuit!—how imposing his dignity; "O quel grand homme! Rien ne peut lui plaire." His hunt after satisfaction is a wild goose chase, to be sure, but not on that account an uninteresting, unexciting chase. On the contrary, it is full of interest and excitement, for the bird gives capital sport, and unlike the fox is never run to earth. How should it, being a bird? There is always a sure 'find,' and in the sense of captured game no 'finish.' Say that the pace has knocked the hunter up, and that he needs repose. Let him take it. When a man is out of sorts with himself and everybody else, the best thing he can do is to go to bed. Charmingly has Frère Du Courcy enforced this moral in his famous address, 'A Mon Lit!'

"Vers un but, vers une espérance,
Lorsque j'ai couru vainement
Je m'endors avec confiance;
Le bien vient dit on, en dormant.

La Fortune, je l'imagine,
Viendra me prendre entre deux draps;
En attendant mieux, qui dort dine;
Et je te dois plus d'un repas."

When he wakes in the morning let the wild goose-hunter resume the chase with unremitted ardour. To it again, undaunted Nimrod! Change thy vocation, change thy residence; the result will be the same. "In culpa est animus qui se non effugit unquam." And therein dwells much to be thankful for. The blessing in disguise from which, do what we will, we may not escape, is that discontented mind which happily for the human family is indeed a continual feast.

PRATTLERS AND FENDER-WEARERS.

In these busy times, when, to use the metaphor of a fine orator, "the wheels of society are set on fire by the rapidity of their own action," the clamour incidental to such swift and complex movement is sadly prejudicial to that peace which is of the very essence of happiness. It stuns the ear; it jars upon the nerves. How inexpressibly soothing is a lull in the storm!—how welcome is the sense of relief when "Silence, like a poultice, comes to heal the wounds of noise!"

Be it remembered that all that is most sublime and beautiful—most edifying and delightful in the operations of the universe, goes on tranquilly. So, too, in the animal world. Not your horse, nor your ass, nor your ox, nor any being that is yours ever talks to you. Cats, black-beetles, husbands, and other domestic creatures, never dream of answering.

Observe the spheres; take note of vegetation; look at the ladies. Neither sun, nor moon, nor stars make any row about shining; the flowers blossom noiselessly, the trees burst speechlessly into leaf; the young woman whom you keep company with does not vociferate 'Yes,' but softly murmurs the enchanting monosyllable when you ask her the momentous question, "Will you be mine?" *My* young woman, to be sure, said 'No' in a voice of thunder; but *that* is only the exceptional case proving the rule.

It is not simply the mechanical uproar caused by the multitudinous traffic in the streets that disconcerts you, grievous though that affliction be. The emulous clack of human tongues is still worse. You dine, or try to do so, at one of those superbly-furnished restaurants now frequent in London, where everything is to be had—except anything worth eating, and you are dinned past endurance by the so-called 'table-talk' of the crowd around you, whose chatter may be likened to that of a flock of sparrows in a lime-tree. When you travel you are in no better case. In gentleman-like contemplation fancy free, fain would you meditate pensively on the mysteries of creation. Fain would you hold philosophic commune with yourself. It may not be. The man who happens to be sitting next you in a railway-carriage,

tram-car, omnibus, or steamboat, will not permit it. He is an utter stranger to you as you are to him. You would not care though he were in Jericho, nor he though you were in Mesopotamia. Yet he insists upon talking to you. He *will* bore you with his dreary platitudes about weather and politics. There is no escape from him unless you throttle him, and to *that* he might object.

Next in annoyance to the Stranger who *will* talk is perhaps the Guest who won't go. Breathes there a householder or even a lodger who has not suffered from the visitation of such a dropper-in? He is not a modest man—not he. Modesty and he might be married for all the relationship existing between them. Unmindful of the homely proverb, "It is manners to wait till you're asked," he invites himself, and lingers at your fireside from hour to hour, though he had given you distinctly to understand that he only looked in for a few minutes. The night wears on; the clock keeps striking; the fire is going out; the room grows dark and chilly. He cares not. There he sits, "like your grandsire carved in alabaster," only that unlike that venerable effigy he is not without a taste for alcoholic refreshment. What are you to do with him? "Hospitality should run fine to the last," as Charles Lamb charmingly

remarks; yet even hospitality, one might suppose, must be subject to the laws of human endurance. But no. He is under your own roof, and even though you were an Arab you could not dislodge him. Besides, if you were to tell him to begone you would make an enemy of him for life; and who wants to have an enemy? Hints are thrown away upon him. They are the only things he won't take. Truly, the Host who finds himself face to face with such a visitor as this—'fender-wearers' they call them in America—feels the bitter penalties annexed to the chivalric maxim, *Noblesse oblige.* But is there no remedy? Can it be that in this ingenious age the case is desperate? No greater benefactor to his race will ever appear on earth than he who shall one day devise a practical method for the solving of this most perplexing of all problems—How to get rid of the guest who won't go. If, as the proverb enjoins, the bird that can sing and won't sing ought to be made to sing, surely in parity of reasoning the guest that can go and won't go ought to be made to go. What sort of coercion should be applied either to the feathered or the unfeathered biped it is for the philosopher to determine.

HONEYMOONS.

LIFE—what there is of it—is at best but a precarious and rickety affair. Trouble follows it like a shadow; and Sorrow is its constant associate. Not without good warrant in reason as well as rhyme sang the worshipful Messrs. Sternhold and Hopkins—

> "As sparks fly upward to the sky,
> So man is born to miser—y."

Nor Man alone, but his wife, Woman, as well, whose destiny, indeed, is often the darker of the two. She has told me so before now, and I quite believe her.

How much of the worries and bothers with which human bodies are afflicted in the course of their earthly pilgrimage is due to their astonishing relationship to the celestial orbs, and notably to the

Moon, is a matter which has hardly received all the consideration it deserves. Our affinity to that beautiful but inconstant creature is, of all the mysteries that overhang and environ us, the most marvellous, the most bewildering. Cowley sighed to escape to some submarine retreat, where, freed from the lunar agencies so fatal to the comfort of terrene existence, he might lead a life cool, calm, and cosy. He longed to roam

> "Beneath the mighty ocean's wealthy caves,
> Beneath the eternal fountain of all waves,
> Where their vast court the mother waters keep,
> And undisturbed by *moons* in silence sleep."

Vain the hope! No such grotto is accessible to the wavering feet of mortals. From the bondage of Cynthia there is no chance of liberation! The cruel witch! the pitiless enchantress! "The devil's in the moon for mischief!" exclaimed poor Byron, whom she well-nigh drove out of his wits by her odious wiles. We are all the bondsmen and bondswomen of the Moon—her slaves, her dupes, her victims. We cry for her in childhood; in manhood we try to shoot her at the approach of quarter-day; but all to no purpose. From her silvery pavilion in the sky she smiles upon us with a meek, dementing smile, and simply leaves us mad. Having treated us thus

scurvily, she next attacks the sea, convulsing the elements and setting the wind and wave in writhing conflict. That is the way the Moon behaves; "and then she looks so modest all the while." Modest, forsooth! As well might you look for icicles in the tropics as for modesty in the Moon.

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet, are of imagination all compact," says WILLIAM. Each of the three has his own peculiar Moon, whose special fool and zany he is. But of these moons that of the lover is assuredly the most unaccountable. Imagination stands aghast at the name of it. The Honeymoon! The very word is redolent of deception. Honey and moonshine! What a combination! Hark to the definition given by a French philosopher not less wise than witty—"Lune de Miel! Premier mois de mariage où l'on gôute les plaisirs de l'union, sans connaître les tracas du mênage et la froideur de l'habitude." Honeymoon! The first month of marriage, when we taste the delights of love without the cares of housekeeping and the coldness that follows custom. The coldness that follows custom! Alas, my heart! This disenchanting frigidity would seem to be no new sensation. It is, at all events, as old as the seventeenth century, for the anonymous author of a poem called *The*

Cornucopia, published in 1612, makes mournful mention of it:—

> "And now their Honeymoon, that late was clear,
> Doth cold obscure and tremulous appear."

With a raillery beyond the reach of a masculine pen, and altogether feminine in its delicate poignancy, the Countess of Blessington remarks that "Love-matches are made between young people who pay one month of honey for a life of vinegar." Of kindred though not so refined sarcasm is the statement of Voltaire in that charming little story of his called *Zadig*—"Zadig has now discovered that the first month of marriage, as is written in the Book of Zend, is the Moon of Honey, and that the second is the Moon of Absinthe." Ah! If Absinthe made the heart grow fonder there would not be so much to complain of after all. But "there's the rub," as the sometime Prince of Denmark acutely observed. It does not. Ours is but a world of phantoms. They vanish ere yet we are quite certain of their presence.

> "Tout s'use!
> Une lune de miel n'a pas trente quartiers."

The derivation of the word 'Honeymoon' is a nut which the philologists have not as yet broken to

their perfect satisfaction. A Cambrian grammarian of some ingenuity if not of equal erudition, traces the phrase to a practice once prevalent in Wales of drinking metheglin—a fermented liquor of rich potency made from honey—for thirty days after the marriage of the bride and bridegroom. What a treat for their friends! More figurative and probably not less reasonable is the theory of Richard Huloet, who, in his *Abecdarium Anglo-Latinum*, published in 1552, gives this delightfully quaint etymology: "*Hony Mone*—a terme proverbially applied to such as be newe married, which will not fall out at ye fyrste, but th' one loveth the other at ye beginnynge exceedyngly; the likelyhode of theyr exceadynge love appearing to aswage makes ye vulgar people cal which time the hony mone." On which Mr. Furnivall remarks somewhat bitterly, "So it is honey-moon because the honey will change like the moon —to water or gall."

To the Present Writer—a desolate exile from the paradise of matrimony—all persons and things connected with a Wedding are unfathomably mysterious. He always feels inclined to laugh at the Bridegroom as at an unconscionable impostor, who has won a lady's heart by plausible pretences, and to weep over the bride, the heroine of an hour, the martyr of a

life. The orange-blossoms which the orange knoweth not, the favours which call to mind King Henry's glove in Fluellen's cap—"here, Fluellen, wear thou this favour for me, and stick it in thy cap"—the jingling bells, ever out of tune; the worn-out old jokes with which the married couple are greeted; the rice with which they are ridiculously pelted; the old slippers which are thrown after them, and the cake whereon they are fed—that cake which, sweet on the top and indigestible below, looks so like a practical joke against matrimony on the part of the confectioner—all these matters fill the mind of the Present Writer with mingled feelings of wonder, merriment, and awe. Nor can he hear without amazement the wife's solemn vow to yield honour and obedience to one who, by reason of his sex, is disqualified to receive either. But most of all is the P. W. bewildered and perplexed by the Honeymoon. That as a prelude and preparation for the stern duties of life two young persons—for they are only 'persons' after all—should withdraw for a month from the briary world in which their lot is cast, to some sequestered Arcadia where, mindful only of themselves, they may skip up and down the "primrose paths of dalliance" is a proceeding which, however pleasant for a while, is likely to prove somewhat

illusory in the result. So, to be sure, the philosophic may regard it. Yet is there something to be said for the Honeymooners' view of the question after all. What though Edwin and Angelina may hereafter mutually sigh to think that neither is quite so benignant to the other in Belgravia as they both were when basking in "the purple light of love" at Bournemouth, none the less will they have treasured in their memories some happy reminiscences, and not without fond and tender joy will they remember that they tarried together, though only for a month, on the one green oasis in "the arid desert of life"—as grumblers delight to describe a planet which to relinquish they would regard as the greatest of all calamities.

THE USES AND ABUSES OF BURLESQUE.

"PARODY and burlesque, though ever so well executed, have very little merit in them, because the highest degree of perfection which they are capable of attaining to may be acquired by a very moderate capacity." This *dictum*, which rests on the high authority of Tobias Smollett, is obviously true in the case of parody, a sorry performance at the best; but its applicability to burlesque may well be called in question, the most celebrated works extant in that class being so very good that they could have been produced only by writers of eminent ability.

That burlesque has its appointed place in the drama as well as in literature will not be denied. It is the abuse not the use of the thing that challenges protest. Of the legitimate use in works of fiction the examples are many and notable. Chaucer's

Rhyme of Thopas, Smith's *Rejected Addresses*, Hood's *Odes to Great People*, Peter Pindar's pungent escapades are familiar to us all. Butler, in *Hudibras*, made rare fun of the Puritans—their false sanctity and Pharisaical pretension. In the person of Sir Piercie Shafton, the fads and follies of the Euphuists—hardly less nonsensical, though certainly less unmanly, than those of our so-called 'Æsthetes'—were held up to most amusing ridicule by Sir Walter Scott. When the chivalry of Spain, degenerating into fantasy, had lost its heroic spirit, Cervantes "laughed Spain's chivalry away," and in so doing made the world the merrier for all time.

On the English stage, burlesque is at least as old as that king of theatrical amateurs, Mr. Bottom the weaver. Never have the ignorance, selfishness, and presumption of certain non-professional actors been submitted to more comical exposition than in the play within a play, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, George Villier's *Rehearsal*, Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, and Sheridan's *Critic*, are famous instances of the employment of stage-burlesque in a salutary service. For, be it remembered—let it never be forgotten—that in all these cases, whether literary or dramatic, some abuse was to be rectified, some

folly or affectation was to be caricatured, something false in sentiment, vile in manners, or absurd in fashion was to be laughed out of existence. Here was fair game; and fairly was it played. So long as the burlesque-writer limits his satire to such themes as these, he has a clear message, a fair mission, and may not be stayed; but the moment he overleaps the bounds of his prescribed province and seeks to ridicule the sacred, the innocent, the beautiful, or the sublime, it is time to exclaim *Siste manum!*

The extravaganzas of the late Mr. Planché, founded for the most part on pretty fables or legends, were fanciful and elegant. Comic opera with Mr. Gilbert's witty, never vulgar, libretto and Sir A. Sullivan's graphic, melodious music has a two-fold charm all its own: but the flashy, 'leggy' burlesque with its 'slangy' songs, loutish 'breakdowns,' vulgar jests, paltry puns, and witless grimacing at all that is graceful and poetic, is simply odious. Where is it to end? Let the scoffers have free rein, and nothing in heaven above or on the earth below will be secure from their dishonouring touch. In the days of Scarron the most solemn incidents of Scripture and the most awful mysteries of Christianity were seized as topics of ridicule by the remorseless burlesque-mongers of Paris. We have not as yet reached that

depth of infamy. But it is no exaggeration to say that there is not a popular work of imaginative literature, however tender and pathetic, that does not now find its way to the stage, there to be derided and distorted in a ribald burlesque. Can this be right? Surely there must be something under the sun deserving of respect. It cannot be that the beautiful and the good, the tragic and the romantic, the noble and the sublime, were created for no other purpose than to be made game of.

> "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,
> Its loveliness increases, it can never
> Pass into nothingness."

So wrote John Keats, but the burlesque-man would parody the poet thus—

> "A thing of beauty is a jest for ever,
> Its loveliness decreases, it must never
> Rise above foolishness."

The finest of Shakespere's tragedies have been travestied before now; and to what end? To debase still further the appetites of the groundlings and to "make the judicious grieve"—nothing more. Besides, where is the wit of such a proceeding? The thing is so easily done, even by the least gifted, that it is inconceivable that any man of ability should condescend to do it. To write *Hamlet* as the poet

wrote it exacted the highest effort of human genius. To turn Hamlet into a buffoon by perverting his every deed and word, and making him—so to speak—walk in upon his head, is an achievement within the compass of any one at Earlswood. Say that the Prince of Denmark figures upon the stage as a ranting, half-starved tailor from Chalk Farm; that Othello is metamorphosed into a Hottentot who is smothered by Desdemona, not she by him; that Shylock comes out as a Jew from Petticoat Lane whetting a knacker's knife—what then? Where is the fun to atone the atrocity? Fun! Alack! "Quis temperet a lacrymis" for outraged decency and beauty deformed?

It is among the sorrows of memory to remember the late Mr. Robson as Shylock in an outrageous parody of *The Merchant of Venice*. A sadder spectacle was never witnessed. To see a man ruthlessly disenchanting the spell his own genius had created was indeed a sorry sight. The thick-and-thin advocates of burlesque, in season and out of season, are fond of citing Robson. They never made a greater mistake. In him was lost an actor who, had he but done justice to himself and given fair play to his splendid abilities, might have ranked among the greatest that have ever trodden the

British stage. His stature, or rather his want of it, was no doubt against him; but his gifts were of lofty altitude. He had some of the highest attributes of his art—fancy, imagination, invention, dramatic grasp of character, passion brilliant and intense; but all were made worthless and of no avail by his fatal propensity to burlesque. The same player may excel both in tragedy and comedy. Garrick did so. But no true glory is to be attained by the actor who, delighting to leap, in the twinkling of an eye, from the sublime to the ridiculous, has no sooner done anything great than he proceeds to turn it into derision. It is as though a sculptor, having carved a fine statue, should knock its nose off; or as though a painter, having painted a fine landscape, should incontinently besmear it. Not more wise than the conduct of the cow who, after giving good milk, puts her foot in the pail, was the practice of Robson; and the end was ruin. His style grew fragmentary and spasmodic, and he became incapable of sustained effort.

Burlesque, insensate, spiritless, and undiscriminating, demoralizes both the audience and the players. It debases the public taste. The injury resulting to the actor's art from the perpetual perversion of it is too manifest to need demonstration. Nor can the

art be degraded without degradation to the artist as well.

Without by any means approving the sweeping prohibition of Boileau, "Que le burlesque jamais ne souille votre ouvrage," we cannot but admit the justice of the reflections of a more modern French critic—"Le genre burlesque est une ivresse de l'imagination qu'il ne faut se permettre au plus que par délassement. Les hommes ne s'attachent vivement qu'aux tableaux qui rendent leurs traits, leurs affections, leurs passions. Les peintures outrées, les charges, les caricatures en un mot, leur sont étrangères. Ils n'y prennent qu'un faible et passager intérêt. C'est la peinture de nos mœurs qui nous touche. Plus la copie sera vive et ressemblante plus elle procurera de satisfaction."

THE WILD VICISSITUDES OF TASTE.

GARRICK, uttering his own thoughts in the words of Johnson, bewailed as a 'hard lot' the duty, devolving upon actors in the exercise of their vocation to watch "the wild vicissitudes of taste." Surely the grievance is but imaginary. The task complained of may well afford both edification and amusement to the philosophic mind. It is to those very vicissitudes that we are indebted for that variety which lends to human life its most brilliant charm. Reverence for the courtly memory of Lord Chesterfield, who sternly forbade his son ever to mention the man, precludes allusion to that insensate farmer who once upon a time kissed his cow in preference to his wife, and justified the act upon the ground, "Every man to his taste." The tear of sympathetic sentiment is due to the lady; but Reason is on the side of her rival. Gratitude, too, may have had something to

do with the preference. Our bucolic friend may have been vaccinated. Anywise, it is certain, that in the matter of kissing, above all others, must the principle, for which he contended, be respected. But, indeed, it holds good in all things. That plea is unanswerable; that right is indefeasible. *De gustibus nil disputandum.* The principle prevails from the equator to either pole.

There is in Nature an infinite diversity of tastes, picturesquely expressed in the variegated hues of vegetation which "paint the meadows with delight." Nor in these alone. The scenery of the sky is continually changing; the wind bloweth whence and whither it listeth; the sea is never long in the same temper; no two sunsets since creation have ever been exactly alike. And what is true of the natural world is not less so of the social. To the beauty and well-being of each the vicissitudes of taste, however wild, are equally essential. This is as it should be, which is more than can be said of all things in this perverse planet. If everybody were of the same way of thinking, what a life we should have of it! Silence would reign supreme, for there would be no contrast of ideas wherewith to quicken eloquence, or to freshen the currents of conversation. Consider the ladies! Suppose they were all to wear dresses of the same

hue, material, and fashion—how dull, how inanimate would be the aspect of the streets! Sad, indeed, and gloomy would be the city landscape. As well have all the flowers in the garden of the same colour. Deny the ladies the right to vary their costumes! To forbid them to change their minds were not less cruel. Then, again, suppose there were no brunettes, but only blondes on earth! The monotony of the thing would not only drive *them* mad, but the superfluous sex as well. *Semper mutabilis fœmina.* It is the very mutability of woman that makes of her the resistless enchantress she is.

The famous dictum of that indefatigable writer of unreadable books, the late Sir George Cornewall Lewis, "Life would be pleasant enough if it were not for its pleasures," has obtained such currency that it may be said to have crystallized by this time into a brilliant proverb. Yet, like some other adages which pass for sapient, it is not so transparently wise as to escape all challenge. "If," says Gibbon, "the love of pleasure is refined by art and learning, improved by the charms of social intercourse, and corrected by a just regard to economy, to health, and to reputation, it is productive of the greatest part of human happiness." This is a highly philosophic proposition doubtless, but the provisoes with which it is so

abundantly clogged make it difficult of application. If before boating, skating, climbing Mont Blanc, going to the play, setting out upon a journey, riding a steeplechase, hunting a fox, swallowing an oyster, or marrying a young woman whom he knows to be too good for him, a man were to sit down and calmly inquire whether the pleasures he is in search of are strictly accordant with art, learning, economy, health, and reputation, it is more than likely that he would give up each pursuit in despair. And then what a weary, tedious world would this become! Sir Cornewall Lewis's saying, though not wholly true, yet contains an element of truth, as also does the French proverb, "En cherchant les plaisirs on perd le bonheur"—in hunting after pleasures we lose happiness; but, after all said and done, pleasure is unquestionably a large constituent of happiness; and sad, indeed, would life be without it.

What a blessed thing it is for the human race, my dear friends and friendesses, that every mother's son and daughter of us make to themselves their own ideal of pleasure. Were this not so, and that we were all travelling on the same beaten track, what jostling and elbowing there would be to be sure! How irksome, how uncomfortable would be our earthly pilgrimage! But, thank heaven, *quot*

homines tot sententiæ. Some find delight in society, some in solitude; some prefer fair women, some dark (the Present Writer loves both); some are wise enough to marry, some mad enough to remain single; some take to riding, 'other some' to reading, and so on to the end of the chapter. "Quiet to quick bosoms is a hell." Persons so constituted glory in a row. The waving of flags, the ringing of bells, the strains of martial music, the cheering of the populace, the very running to and fro of the eager crowd set their blood a-dancing, and make their hearts thrill with delightful excitement. To others these exhibitions are productive only of misery. They abhor a noise, and deem peace the central feeling of all felicity. They are of opinion with Byron who declared that he "hated a mob as he hated a bishop," and with Sidney Smith who averred that "a mob *is* a mob though it be composed of bishops." And so the world wags, and so will it continue to wag after we have ceased to be waggish. Every man and every woman to his and her humour. Everybody for ever, and no taxes!

This vein of thought brings us to the consideration, what a priceless blessing is change. As it is the law of the material, so likewise is it the grace and glory of the moral, world. Variety is proverbially pleasing. Spring would be but gloomy weather if

we had nothing else but Spring. Suppose we had no alternation of day and night, no succession of the seasons, no panoramic clouds to diversify the aspect of the firmament, no many-coloured flowers to variegate the surface of the earth, and only one sex, the wicked ugly male, the world would be intolerable for its monotony. There would be no living in it with comfort or dignity. The Chameleon is your only philosopher. So true is the saying of the Gallic sage, "La variété c'est la vie; l'uniformité c'est la mort." And so it is in tastes and opinions. Who shall presume to call in question a lady's right to change her mind? If man had a mind to change, the like privilege might be claimed for him; but he has not. However, "let that pass," as Mrs. Quickly says in the play. One thing is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun, that "the rascally virtue of consistency," as the late Mr. Cobbett was pleased to call it, would, if generally practised, land us all in misery.

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

Of all the gifts of imagination, many and various as they are, the most precious is assuredly the power to build castles in the air. This priceless faculty is bestowed with the profligate brilliancy of undiscriminating sunshine upon all classes and conditions of men, as well upon the poor shivering in rags as upon the rich arrayed in proverbial purple and fine linen. To both it is equally essential. Its value in enhancing human happiness is indeed inestimable, seeing that it enables us to supplement fact by fancy, and to make good by means of a romantic invention the shortcomings of Fortune in our regard.

"Châteaux en Espagne"—"Castles in Spain"—is the name oddly given by the French to those aërial structures which we one and all find a mystical delight in erecting.

> "Quel esprit ne bat la campagne?
> Qui ne fait châteaux en Espagne?"

asks La Fontaine. Madame de Sevigné says in her

own pleasant little way, "In France we build castles in Spain; but when we are in Spain we have no such ambition."

Terrene castles involve considerations of outlay. Before you sink the foundations you must take into account the prices of the site, the masonry, and the adornments. Castles in the air need no such disenchanting calculations. A fig for the expense! The design costs you nothing. You are your own architect. The materials and furniture are equally cheap. You make them yourself. You are your own builder and furnisher. Give free rein to your taste, however sumptuous! You are at liberty to build your castle upon any scale of magnificence, and to decorate it with more than palatial splendour. All this you may do without a penny in your pocket. In the exhaustless treasury of your imagination you will find the means to defray all charges. Fear not the bullet of the Land Leaguer. To you and all other men of affluent fancy belongs in hereditary right the fee-simple of Cloudland. Rent there is none to pay, and taxes are unknown.

Though youth is *par excellence* the season for building aërial castles, men keep at the work all the days of their vanishing lives. It has a fascination which no lapse of time can weaken, no change of

circumstance impair. Again and again the edifice comes toppling about the builder's ears; but, nothing daunted, he sets about the task of reconstruction with as much zest as ever. This being so we may as well sing a song about

CASTLES IN THE AIR.

How rapidly gay youth erects
Its palaces and bowers!
We're all ethereal architects
In boyhood's sunny hours.
With lavish hand we paint and gild
Our structures, rich and rare;
On rosy-tinted clouds we build
Our castles in the air.

The beauteous halls we swiftly raise,
More swiftly are undone;
They vanish from our raptured gaze,
Like frost-work in the sun.
But Boys are Hope's own knight; and when
Did they for failure care?
With merry hearts we build again
Our castles in the air.

To Manhood's haughty prime such joys
Mere vanity display;
We laugh disdainfully at boys,
No wiser yet than they.
For, Manhood's projects, great and small,
Which look so wondrous fair,
Alas! what are they, after all,
But castles in the air?

A grim pathos lurks in this saying of the unhappy Rousseau—"Of all my glittering castles in the air, one only now remains to me, How to get a living." That it should come to this! Still more sorrowful is the testimony of the greatest of naval warriors. "My castles in the air are all gone," sighed Nelson; "I am ready to quit this world of trouble, and envy none but those of the estate six feet by two."

In certain remote regions both of Scotland and Ireland lingers to this day a poetic superstition that, not indeed in the air, but deep beneath the sparkling waters of mountain lakes, may be discerned towers, temples, palaces, and castles beautiful to behold. They are thought to be the ruins of submerged cities. Nay more, transmarine Elysiums are not unknown to fanciful belief. The inhabitants of Arranmore are still persuaded that on a clear day they can see from their coast Hy Brisail, or the Enchanted Island, the Paradise of the Pagan Irish, concerning which they narrate many interesting stories. Very sweet and very tender is Moore's allusion to this romantic tradition in the verses beginning, "Oh! Arranmore, loved Arranmore!"

THE PLEASURES OF TEA.

It is curious to consider the effect of particular articles of human consumption upon the earthly destiny of mankind. Take, for examples, wine, beer, tobacco, opium, and tea. Grievous as are the evils that have accrued from the abuse of these things, the blessings that have followed from the rational use of them are priceless. What sorrows have they alleviated, what sufferings lightened, what cares assuaged! We have not only the experience of all ages, but the supreme authority of Holy Scripture, for the statement that "wine maketh glad the heart of man"; and speaking, as we are bound to believe, under heavenly inspiration, Solomon utters an express injunction that wine is to be given to "those that be of heavy hearts." That both tobacco and opium have been of essential service in mitigating that nervous irritation which is the secret desolater of

human life, is a fact which the ignorant and the fanatical alone would venture to call in question. But of all the domestic comforters for which we are indebted, under Providence, to the vegetable world, Tea is at once the most soothing and the most exhilarating. To estimate the influence exercised upon society by the invisible spirits of wine, beer, tobacco, opium, and tea, all that is needed is to depict to yourself, by force of fancy, what society would be without them. It is not too much to say that the sudden and complete abolition of these five things would destroy civilization, and reduce the whole social system to its elements. We should be no better than savages. A world without vines, hops, the 'weed,' poppies, and congou! As well talk of a world without the Sun, or—darker still—without a Woman. Imagination refuses to contemplate a picture so appalling.

Our present business is with Tea. Johnson's definition is characteristically curt and bluff—"Tea, a word, I suppose, Chinese. A Chinese plant, of which the infusion has lately been much used in Europe." Mr. Timbs, founding the assertion apparently upon the authority of the Lexicographer, assures us that the Earl of Arlington, in the year 1666, brought from Holland, for sixty shillings, the

first pound of tea received in England, so that the first cup of tea made in England was possibly drunk upon the site of Buckingham Palace. There seems, however, to be satisfactory reason for the belief that its introduction into this country should be dated a few years earlier. Pepys records his having sent for a cup of tea—"a China drink, of which he had never drunk before"—on September 26th, 1660; and in a newspaper called *Rugge's Diurnal*, it is stated that tea was sold in almost every street of London in 1659, and that it stood so high in estimation that two years later the East India Company thought a couple of pounds a gift worthy the acceptance of the King. After the Restoration, tea became a fashionable beverage at Court, owing to the example of Catherine the Queen of Charles II., who had been accustomed to it in Portugal. William III. is said to have been a connoisseur in tea, and to have paid for his Hyson no less than three guineas a pound, a sum probably equivalent to fully twice that amount in our time. In the year 1734 the market value of tea was so high as to place the article hopelessly beyond the consumption, not only of the poor, but of all who did not belong to the very well-to-do classes. It appears from an advertisement in *Read's Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, for Saturday, April 27th

of that year, that Congou ranged in price from 10*s.* to 12*s.* per lb., Pekoe from 14*s.* to 16*s.*, and Hyson from 20*s.* to 25*s.* Of the retail tea-shops which then competed zealously for the patronage of the luxurious, the most celebrated was that in Exchange Alley, opened in 1658, by Mr. Thomas Garway, who proudly proclaimed, in the *Political Mercury*, and other journals, his ability "to sell the finest teas, from 16*s.* to 50*s.* the pound." The fame of 'Garway's' survived to our times, and it is only within the last few years that the establishment, after passing through many successive phases, finally disappeared.

Tea, like every other salutary innovation, had at first to encounter bitter opposition. Cynics sneered at it; many of the faculty denounced it as injurious to health. Good managers inveighed against it with peculiar acerbity, reviling it as "the utter destruction of all economy, the bane of good housewifery, and the source of all idleness." Dramatists railed against it as an indulgence "only fit for women, and men who lived like women"; and Mr. Henry Saville, writing to his uncle, Secretary Coventry, scoffed at "the base, unworthy, Indian practice of calling for tea after dinner, in place of the pipe and bottle." Some of the poets, who should have known better, joined in the senseless outcry

against tea-drinkers, to whom they ascribed an inveterate habit of scandalmongering. To these bilious bards, tea was hardly less hateful than are wine and ale to the insensate apostles of so-called 'Temperance,' now-a-days. Young, exquisite creature, declared that he "trembled at the fatal stream of Tea, as Lethe dreadful to the love of fame"; and Dean Swift sketched a tea-table scene with savage satire, thus—

"Let me now survey
Our madam o'er her evening tea,
Surrounded with the noisy clans
Of prudes, coquettes, and harridans.
Now voices over voices rise,
While each to be the loudest vies;
They contradict, affirm, dispute,
No single tongue one moment mute;
All mad to speak, and none to hearken,
They set the very lap-dog barking.
Their chattering makes a louder din
Than fish-wives o'er a cup of gin,
Far less the rabble roar and rail
When drunk with sour election ale."

Swift here displays all the unmanliness and unfairness which he seldom failed to exhibit in his dealings with women. But better counsels prevailed in better quarters. Waller describes Tea as "the Muses' friend, who keeps the palace of the soul serene."

And by the way, that last phrase reminds us of an unceremonious appropriation by Lord Byron, who, without asking Waller's leave, talks cavalierly about "the dome of thought, the palace of the soul." This *par parenthèse.* Alexander Pope enumerates, among the many claims of Hampton Court to historic dignity, the fact that it is the place where Queen Anne condescends to take tea—

> "Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,
> Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes tea."

This couplet, and others written in the days of Swift and Pope, prove beyond dispute that the word 'tea' was then invariably pronounced as though written 'tay.' The pronunciation seems to have continued until about the middle of the eighteenth century, when the word was made to rhyme with 'degree,' as appears from the following effusion from the pen of a magazine poet, who at that time wrote many verses in honour of the Chinese plant—

> "Hail, Sovereign Leaf, whose virtue can dispense
> To matrons modesty, to maidens sense,
> Whose liquid essence every climate charms,
> Whose balm enlivens, and whose spirit warms
> Green is by most admired, the female tea;
> Some still prefer the masculine Bohea.

From China's vase of variegated hue
You gently sip the sweet, nectareous dew;
More humble delf contents the rustic dame,
With glossy white or brown, of antique frame.
All, all unite in high and low degree,
That nothing was, or will be, like to Tea."

But of all the literary votaries of Tea, the most insatiate was Dr. Johnson. Mrs. Thrale assures us that she used often to sit quietly by his side, and make tea for him till four in the morning, an example of devotedness all the more worthy of admiration, that the great Moralist was usually as cross as a bag of cats, and hardly vouchsafed to thank his gentle Hebe for her unwearying ministrations. But Samuel was above the affectation of disguising his fondness for tea. On the contrary, he candidly describes himself as "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has for many years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning." This last phrase his friend, Tom Tyers, happily parodied,—"Te veniente die—te decedente," &c. Hawkins calls Johnson's addiction to tea 'unmanly,' and almost gives it the colour of a crime. Wilson Croker, writing thirty years ago, said that the Rev. Mr. Parker, of Henley, was then

in possession of a tea-pot which had belonged to Dr. Johnson, and which contained above two quarts. "The doctor's defence of tea against Mr. Jonas Hanway's violent attack upon that elegant and popular beverage," says Boswell, "shows how very well a man of genius can write upon the slightest subject, when he writes, as the Italians say, *con amore*. I suppose no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great, that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it. He assured me that he never felt the least inconvenience from it." If a man's figure might be influenced by his diet, the Doctor might have realized in form Pope's witty description of the actor who—

> "A living tea-pot stands, one arm held out,
> One bent; the handle this, and that the spout."

While Tea was still a novelty, many and various were the methods of cooking it. Sir Kenelm Digby, in his *Book of Receits* (1669), advocates the beating-up of eggs with it. Sometimes it was drunk steaming hot, sometimes quite cold; and it is worthy of remark that 'Cold Tea' was a slang name for

Brandy, in the eighteenth century. Southey tells us that Miss Hutchinson's great-grandmother was one of a party who sat down to the first pound of tea that ever came into Penrith. It was sent as a present, and without directions how to use it. They boiled the whole at once in a kettle, and sat down to eat the leaves, with butter and salt; and they wondered, as well they might, how any person could like such a dish! Equally discordant were the counsels as to the proper time for drinking tea—morning, noon, and night having each its passionate advocates. "Tea, thou innocent pretence for bringing the wicked of both sexes together in a morning! exclaims Colley Cibber, with that good-humoured roguery of expression for which he was justly famous. That it was customary in some distinguished circles to drink tea after supper seems clear, from the following entry in the Diary of Lord Clarendon, dated February 10th, 1688—"Le Père Couplet supped with me. He is a man of very good conversation. After supper we had tea, which he said was really as good as any he had drunk in China. The Chinese who came over with him and Mr. Fraser supped also with us."

In China, cold water is disliked, and considered unwholesome, and therefore tea is taken to quench

the thirst, which it does best when unmixed, a bottle of cold tea, without either milk or sugar, being, according to Mr. Colquhoun, of the *Moor and the Loch*, the best thirst-assuager a sportsman can carry with him. The practice of scenting tea is very common in China, and various odoriferous plants are employed for this purpose. In Russia, a squeeze of a lemon often takes the place of our cream; and in Germany, where the tea is made very weak, it is common to flavour it with rum, cinnamon, or vanilla. "The most perfect way of using tea," says Professor Johnston, "is that described, I think, by Captain Basil Hall, as being practised on the coast of South America, where tea-leaves, after being exhausted by infusion, are handed round the company upon a silver salver, and partaken of by each guest in succession. The exhilarating effects of the hot liquid are, in this practice, followed by the nutritive effects of the solid leaf." A Chinese legend relates that "a pious hermit, who, in his watchings and prayers, had often been overtaken by sleep, so that his eyelids closed, in holy wrath against the weakness of the flesh cut them off, and threw them on the ground. But a good fairy caused a tea-shrub to spring out of them, the leaves of which exhibit the form of an eyelid bordered with lashes, and possess the gift of hinder-

ing sleep." The scenting of tea should seem to be a ridiculous superfluity. That the dyeing of it was deemed an offence, and treated accordingly, is clear from the statement in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for November, 1736, that on the 9th of that month, "a Jew dealer in the Minories was convicted for selling 173 pounds of dyed tea at 3*s.* 9*d.* per pound, for which he is to forfeit £10 for every pound, amounting to £1730 for the whole"—a judgment which proves that our forefathers regarded the tampering with human food and drink as a less venial matter than it is now considered.

In what happy contrast with the spiteful sketch of Swift is this fascinating little picture from the pen of the gentle Cowper—

> "Now stir the fire and close the shutters fast,
> Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
> And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
> Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
> That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
> So let us welcome peaceful evening in."

Every candid and genial heart will bear witness to the equal truth and beauty of this charming description. Yes, "the cups that cheer, but not inebriate," have a delightful effect upon the spirits, and are of essential service in brightening us up, and enabling

us to present a brave front to the petty cares and annoyances that infest our life. When we bear in mind the gladdening, exhilarating influence of tea, its comforting qualities, now, happily, available for rich and poor alike, its pleasant associations, and the opportunities it creates for innocent conviviality, whether at breakfast 'kettledrum,' or when we welcome peaceful evening in, we cannot but admit that it is indeed a social blessing, and that he who first brought it to England was a benefactor to the nation.

OVER-DOING IT.

"BIDDY," said Dean Swift one day to his cook, "this leg of mutton is over-done; take it down, and do it less." "Plaze your Riverence," replied Biddy, "the thing is impossible." "Well then," rejoined her master, "let this be a lesson to you, that if you must commit mistakes, they at all events shall not be of such gravity as to preclude correction. And above all, Biddy, be sure that you never over-do anything." "I never will," said Biddy.

In this little anecdote the mingled wit and wisdom of the incomparable churchman are displayed to charming effect. It is as pungent as his advice to the Irish to burn everything that came from England —except the coal. Were it not so comical it would be tragical to observe how prone we all are to fall into Biddy's unfortunate blunder; and this not simply

in the matter of mutton, which truly were *fort peu de chose*, but in all other affairs. Too soon dejected and too soon elate, whether in joy or sorrow, in pleasure or business, we are everlasting 'over-doing it.' If, as was the opinion of some ancient philosophers, the gods made men only to laugh at them, there is no part of our behaviour which answers the end of our creation better than this.

Suppose that in the agony of solicitude or the whirlwind of passion we were to take thought and pull up, though but for a moment, to ask ourselves the question, *cui bono?*—Wherefore all this toil and bother? how much more pleasant and peaceful would be our way of life! Our misery would be turned into mirth. Looking at the past through Time's inverted telescope, we should perceive to what molehills those mountains of trouble have to-day degenerated, which yesterday affrighted us by their vast size and ominous shadows. But we are the slaves of fancy, and all coming events are exaggerated to our feverish vision. If correcting imagination by memory we could only discount the future and bethink us to what small dimensions, even in our own estimation, the cares which harass us to-day will be reduced to-morrow, how light would be our hearts, how buoyant our spirits!

Subject to the obvious limitations prescribed by good sense and good feeling, the best philosophy is that of Mr. Toots, as expressed in his five famous words, "It is of no consequence." Of three propositions set forth by an American cynic, "there is nothing true; there is nothing new; and it does not signify," the two last are in the main sound. Though eight-tenths of what is uttered and acted in the world were left unspoken and unperformed, it would not matter a cockle-shell to the human race. Few things in *Joseph Andrews* are more amusing than the encounter between Parson Adams and the Innkeeper. When the Parson, dear old fellow, overdoing it as usual, had wound up his tedious narrative with the inquiry, "Now, pray, resolve me, how should a man know this story if he had not read it?" "Well, master," said mine host, "and what signifies it whether a man knows it or not?" Never before nor since was such a 'facer' given to sage or scholar. The Parson was 'nowhere.' How many vexatious disputants in every-day life might be floored by the same question. What matters it, after all?

Not less true of all other arts than of the actor's is Hamlet's saying, that what is over-done is "from the purpose." Nothing so contributes to power and beauty of composition as an elegant sufficiency of

diction—just enough, not a word more. A man's style is weak in the exact measure of its extravagance, strong in the precise proportion of its truthfulness. Extravagance smacks of vanity, and "every man has just as much vanity as he lacks understanding." Redundancy of epithets, and the employment of large adjectives on small occasions, are practices fatal to good writing. An accurate appraisement of the value of words is not less essential to a writer than a correct sense of colour to a painter. Adjectives and adverbs are the colouring matter of languages. Used with pure taste and nice discrimination, that prismatic matter gives vivacity and picturesqueness to discourse whether of the pen or of the pencil. But used in undue abundance it destroys 'tone,' a quality not less essential to the writer's page than to the painter's canvas. A vigorous, harmonious style can no more co-exist with wordiness than fine fruit with excessive foliage. Whatsoever your pen findeth to write, write it with simplicity and truth, and there leave it. *Simplex munditiis*, a phrase Horatian, vividly felt though not easily translated, suggests that simple grace, that elegant precision, which is assuredly one of the highest qualities of literary art. Having written or spoken to the purpose, "what needeth wordes mo?" as Chaucer, pithiest of poets, is wont to ask. If you go

on refining there is always danger that you may soar beyond the range of apprehension, like Smollett's poor poet, Mr. Melopoyn, who at last grew too sublime to be understood. So too with painting. Beware of over-doing it, lest you lose in force more than you gain in finish. The famous criticism in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, that the picture would have been better if the painter had taken more pains, does not hold good in all cases. On the contrary, how often in these days of over-wrought imitation do we meet with a picture that prompts the reflection how much better it would have been had the painter taken less pains!

The admonition not to over-step the modesty of Nature must be taken with a certain reserve; for Nature is not always modest. Modest forsooth! She is continually losing her temper for any or no cause. Woe worth the man who follows her example! Nature is a wild, wayward creature, and delights in over-doing it, treating us occasionally to thunder and lightning, deluges and volcanoes, hurricanes and tornadoes, and now and then to earthquakes—luxuries which we don't want the least in the world, but had rather be without. Even while I write the sea is in a furious passion, the waves are howling at the base of the cliff like a horde of mad wolves, the clouds

are careering across the firmament at headlong speed, to the manifest terror of the moon, and the night-wind is wailing around my poor little bungalow, and threatening it with instant demolition. More than once to-night have I thrust my head out of window and exclaimed, "Take it easy, O ye crazy elements! Beware of over-doing it!" Bless my heart (and yours), they take no more notice of me than they would though I had cost nothing. There! I can stand it no longer. Rocked in the cradle of my hut I will go to bed. Good night, my dear, good night!

TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

SAPPHICS.

KNOW you the Square that is called from Trafalgar?
Square there is none more absurd in creation;
Statues that well might give fits to young children,
Scowl at the Public.

Hatless and stirrupless rides in his drawers there,
GEORGE the first gentleman once in all Europe.
Coat he has none, but a blanket around him,
King of Rheumatics!

Fountains like syringes squirt half a yard of
Water ridiculous into a basin,
Making preposterous efforts to look like
Picturesque cascades.

But there are spouters far worse than the Fountains,—
Demagogues screaming from Lions of Landseer,
Work they have none, these brave talkative tailors,
'Cause they don't want it.

Perched on the top of his pillar, LORD NELSON
Tells the rude crowd in the Square of Trafalgar,
England expects that they'll all do their duty,
Rough Ragamuffins!

England may hope what she likes, dear old lady,
Still may expect from her children good conduct,
Sad 'tis to think such a mother must often
Be disappointed.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

THIS world is no such Valley of Tears as it is sometimes dolefully described. If it were we should be well rid of it: the Angel Death would be of all visitors the most welcome. Tears there are—alas!—in rueful abundance; but there are also laughs a—many, and smiles not a few. Life is pleasant in various aspects: Nature is altogether delightful.

In the contemplation of the physical universe and in the nice observation of the laws by which it is so marvellously governed, the sympathetic mind must find objects of unfading interest. "Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam, health in the breeze, and freshness in the stream." How joyous!—how exhilarating! The changing seasons, each robed in a beauty of its own, the effulgent sun, the benignant moon, the firmament bejewelled with stars, the many-tongued sea, the flashing rivers, the towering

mountains—all, all are so many sources of wonder and delight to him who wisely considers them.

Nor are the joys of the moral world inferior to those of the natural. The charms of art, literature, and science, the witchery of music, the gaiety of children, the delights of social intercourse, the solace of friendship, the rivalry of ambition, the enchantment of love's young dream—all combine to shed bliss and brightness upon our earthly pilgrimage. What is the matter then? What is amiss? One thing only—Disappointment. That it should all be so short-lived, so precarious and uncertain, and therefore so disappointing. Here to-day and gone to-morrow; nay, rather here at dawn and gone at sunset.

In the estimation of Mr. Wilson in Lord Dufferin's charming little book, *Letters from High Latitudes*, life was "a perpetual filling of leaky buckets and a rolling of stones up-hill." Viewing the question from his own stand-point Mr. Wilson was not far wrong. Disappointment crosses our path persistently, confronts us at every turn. Youth, beauty, riches, fame, pleasure, glory—what are they at best but the perfume and suppliance of a minute?

Yet it is not so much in the swift evanescence of all lovely things in nature—disheartening though

that thought may be—as in our own relation to these vanishing beauties that the sting of disappointment lurks. The most sentimental of poets need not take the disarray of autumn or the havoc of winter inconsolably to heart. Time which destroys *us* past repair will set all *that* right, bringing back spring in all its gladness, and summer in the golden plenitude of its splendour. The rose dies only to come to life again in undiminished loveliness and fragrance. The sun sets to-day to rise to-morrow, the sea ebbs but to re-flow, and though the new moons hasten to perish are they not miraculously renewed? But man fades never to flourish again, departs to return no more.

> "Soles occidere et redire possunt;
> Nobis quum semel occidit brevis lux
> Nox est perpetua una dormienda."

"The glorious stars in their untroubled element shall shine" when we are dust. That the stars should thus live with lustre imperishable is no matter of grievance; but that meantime man, who once shone with still greater splendour, should be in the world that he glorified a clod of the valley, or peradventure a piece of marl stopping a bung-hole, is assuredly somewhat *disappointing* to the paragon of animals —the lord of creation.

It may be that whom the gods love, die young;

yet is there for us mortals something ineffably sad in their death. Weep for the survivors. Beauty perishing ere its prime, youth in the dewy radiance of its freshness gone down to darkness and the worm, all hope unfulfilled, all promise unredeemed—what *can* be more desolating? But this posthumous privilege is theirs—to be remembered for ever. The departed old may be forgotten, but the young dead never. And to fond remembrance they are ever young as at the hour they looked their last upon this vanishing world. In memory amaranthine dwells for me the vision of a girl whom I knew all the days of her brief, fragrant life. Hers were eyes of that rarest of all colours, dark, dark blue, approaching violet; teeth o pearl; lips of coral; bonny brown hair, affluent, lustrous; damask cheeks; a complexion transparent "as a lighted alabaster vase." A laugh she had like a silver bell, a smile the sweetest ever seen. All these were hers; but, as the leaves of the rose in the centre are finest, of all her attributes the best was her heart. Dear heart! Dear heart! Fault thou had'st but one, that I could ever see—

"Thine was the fault that travellers give the moon,
The light was lovely, but—it died too soon."

Ah me, the disappointment! The pity of it, the pity of it! Omnium amans ab omnibus amata, heu

filia dilecta, vitam tuam diturnam facere non poterant quæ fecerunt desideratam. Ave et vale! . . .

Next in anguish to the disappointment caused by the death of those we love is that occasioned by their unkindness. To be persistently misrepresented or perversely misunderstood by those whose happiness has been the dearest object of your existence, whom you would go through fire and water to serve, whom you have toiled for day and night, and for whom you would gladly lay down your life, must indeed be a cruel trial. Such perhaps was the woful lot of him on whose grave at Winchester is written one word, *Miscrrimus*, which being interpreted means *Disappointed.*

To a generous nature there is no pang more deadly than that inflicted by the ingratitude of those he loves. The ingratitude of strangers matters not; it is the ingratitude of the loved ones for whom, as the agonized Moor expresses it, he had "garnered up his heart," that stabs with immedicable wound. To this form of disappointment, which may be called the domestic, Shakspere has given in *King Lear* the most tragical exposition.

"Disappointment walks silently behind enthusiasm." So Madame De Staël finely remarks. The saying is akin to the Horatian about black-visaged Care

being seated upon the crupper behind the mounted Knight. She is no fastidious aristocrat, for she also condescends to jog sneakishly in the footsteps of the humble pedestrian. It is her business to follow us all, rich and poor, gentle and simple, alike. In the writings of Hygynus is an apologue satisfactorily explanatory of her mission, which dates from the creation of mankind. Dame Cura (Care) by chance went over a brook, and taking up some of the slime made an image of it. Jupiter, coming by, put life into it; but Cura and Jupiter could not agree what name to give him or who should own him. The matter was referred to Saturn who gave this judgment—"His name shall be 'Homo' *ab Humo*. Et Cura eum possideat quamdiu vivat," and let Care have possession of him all the days of his life. And so indeed she has.

Disappointment in their respective callings and professions is of necessity the lot of most men. Not all can reach Corinth. Not every climber can get to the top of the tree, and of those who attain that rocking eminence some have ugly falls. In the rivalries of life the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong. The impudent carry off many prizes, and not all have the grace of impudence. To the audacious this world is a land overflowing

with milk and honey. To the modest it is no better than that group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean discovered by Byron, the famous navigator, who not being able to effect a landing by reason of the encircling rocks and the strong currents setting past them, called them "The Isles of Disappointment," by which sad name they are known to this day.

It is among authors, painters, and actors that Disappointment prevails most widely and most bitterly. Your lawyer, parson, and soldier are for the most part fairly content to work in the rank and file of their various vocations. They know that they cannot all be judges, bishops, or generals; but your poet, your painter, and your player, go in for fame, and cannot endure to be denied. Mediocrity, admissible in all other things, is intolerable in Art; and so the mediocre are miserable.

One of the most ambitious of actors was a certain Mr. Ryder, who came hither from Dublin in 1786, and meant to take London by storm. "I have set my heart upon success," he wrote to his mother, "and if I do not get it I shall be cruelly disappointed." He was proud of his talents, still prouder of his personal appearance. A contemporaneous critic, writing in a satirical paper called *The*

Devil's Pocket-Book, disposed of both thus:—"On Wednesday evening, at Covent Garden, the celebrated Roscius of Ireland, Mr. Ryder, made his first appearance in the character of Sir John Falstaff. The muscles of Mr. Ryder's countenance tacitly bid defiance to the assumption of any appearance of gentility. His voice is unharmonious, his face vulgar, and his person altogether bears that indelible stamp of meanness with which niggard Nature has signalized her poorest works in the hour of her ill-humour and narrow economy." Picture to yourself the expression of Mr. Ryder's countenance on reading that critique. He was probably disappointed—poor fellow!

Disappointment in little things is always comical, if not to you who feel it, at all events to your friends who witness it. The absence of the proverbial button from your shirt, the presence of a hair in your soup, of a fly in your ointment, of a bee in your ink or bonnet, of a tack inside your shoe, are matters which, however irritating to *you*, are sure to provoke the laughter of spectators. What fun it is to think even now of the disappointment of Judge Jeffreys on ascertaining that the hamper sent to him out of Essex, which he expected to find full of Colchester oysters, only contained a halter with a polite request

that he would incontinently hang himself. What a rollicking joke it is for the bride to discover that she has married the wrong man, or the bridegroom to find that he has wedded the wrong woman! How exhilarating too it is to see all the parish laughing at you while you are a-chivying of your hat blown off in a high wind! These are the sort of things that make life worth the living.

The disappointment of other persons give zest to the existence of cynical lookers-on. In a French newspaper appeared the other day an advertisement of a country-house for sale, one of its principal attractions being that it commanded a good view not only of a pretty railway-station opposite, but also of the people who missed the train.

Trains of one sort or another we are always missing, to the no small amusement of our neighbours. But be of good heart. Whether in great or small disappointments, the only way is to meet them with unruffled brow. Neither from the groves of the Academy, nor from the garden of Epicurus, nor from the portico of the Stoics, ever came words of truer wisdom than these—"To bear is to conquer our fate."

OUR CITIZEN PLANE TREE.

SAPPHICS.

'Mid the tremendous turbulence of Chèapside,
Where clatter hansom, omnibus, and growler,
Over against the big church with the Bòw Bells,
Waves a green Plane Tree.

Tree not another one is to be seen there;
Chimney-pots only emulate its tòp boughs;
Gutter-stained sparrows, insolent and sooty,
Chirp all about it.

People as plain, ev'ry bit, as this plane tree,
Often have told me in tones confidential,
That they consider the plant very like a
Fish out of water.

Is it not sad? This poor hermit of Wood Street,
Could it but speak, would cry out to the Cockneys,
"Take me, oh, take me, from out of this tùrmoil
Into the country!"

Nay, but we won't, though. We're proud of our
Plane Tree,
Nature's sweet cause it so plaintively prèacheth;
Dreadful the thought is that WILLIAM the
WOODMAN
One day may kill it.

If you are strong, still be merciful, WILLIE;
Fell if you please the New Forest in Hàmpshire,
But don't demolish our Citizen Plane Tree,
OH, MR. GLADSTONE!

AD FRONDATOREM INSIGNEM.

JAM fremunt cives rapidique currus;
Inter et turbas platanus stupendas
Illa Naturæ Superumque leges
Vindicat arbos.
LÆTE te mitem LAPIS oh precamur
Arbori præbe; validam bipennem
Siste, LIGNATOR, foliisque parcas,
O GULIELME!

THE SWEETS AND SOURS OF SUNDAY.

WHEN a pretty young gentleman who is faultlessly attired as to his coat-tails, after the manner of a swallow (and a waiter), and who is moreover the fortunate possessor of a lovely little black moustache, sentimental eye-brows, and a tearful tenor voice, informs us melodiously, though ungrammatically, that "Of all the days that's in the week, he dearly loves but one day, and that's the day that comes betwixt a Saturday and Monday," we sympathize with him, particularly if his voice does not crack in the high notes. Yes, we sympathize, and that cordially, though our agreement may not relate to his alley, nor at all depend on reasons of the Sally order. Between Henry Carey's love-sick apprentice and the holy Mr. Herbert there is a great gulf fixed; but it is easily bridged over by their common preference for the first day of the

week. Of course the saintly George of Bemerton was not inspired to his phrase of the "day most calm, most bright," by considerations of Sarah or any other member of the sex which cheers and not inebriates—if taken in moderation; yet the two singers may be said to be posted at opposite poles of the same sphere of thought between which all lovers of Sunday must stand.

The great mass of mankind who do not succeed in evading the primal punishment of labour may be credited with a partiality for the particular twenty-four hours under consideration. From the ranks of those who regard thus fondly the Christian Sabbath must of course be excluded policemen, vehicular people attached to railways, omnibuses, and cabs, and such professional persons as burglars, murderers, journalists, and essayists, to whom all days are without difference. True, I once knew a Frenchman, who told me that our London Sunday would be "the death of him," and who was also of opinion that everybody ought to be shot at thirty; but he was eccentric. These impracticable individuals form only insignificant deductions from the vast number who love Sunday, and look forward to it, even as the tempest-tossed traveller, of delicate stomach, launched upon the heaving sea, looks yearningly at

the stable and non-nauseating land. It is as a day of rest that it recommends itself most powerfully to the average mind, a day when the ledger may be locked up, the scales cease from oscillating, the saw hang idly on the wall, the spade repose in peace, and man may—oh, what may man do? He cannot be locked up very conveniently, nor cease from oscillation. He couldn't hang on the wall comfortably, and as for reposing in peace, you know where he will have to be before that blessing is vouchsafed to him. Unfortunately, in addition to a body, man has a mind, which cannot, without danger, be drugged into lethargy, and which, in common with his more material being, demands food, taking that which is bad or indifferent, if it cannot get that which is good.

The remarkable feat of abstraction of the "jolly young waterman," who "rowed along, thinking of *nothing at all*," if not merely a vain imagination of the poet, argued exceptional powers. The ordinary brain is not capable of such inactivity, and must occupy itself with something. What shall its possessor do with it? Take it to church? Certainly. But then you see there are people who make use of their religion a great deal during the week, and do not save it all up until Sunday, and whose faith, being

rather a guiding principle than a taste for ecclesiastical pursuits, does not perhaps require special exhibitions. Consequently, they do not feel the obligation to pass the entire day in visible worship. What shall they do, then? What are the noblest pursuits? The study of nature, of science, of art. But are there opportunities for these? Well, yes, a few. The British Museum, the Zoological Gardens, the National Gallery, South Kensington picture exhibitions, aquaria collections. Very well, then; let us go to one of these. Suppose we visit the wonders of antiquity at the British Museum. Bless my dear soul! What vision of terror have we here? Before the doors stands a gentleman of austere aspect, who howls at us—"What! look at the vestiges of creation, the remains of the creatures that the water brought forth after their kind; read 'sermons in stones' that were the foundation of the earth; survey the tablets inscribed with the story of the Sacred Book; wonder over its illustrations in the carvings that speak of the mighty hunter Nimrod, of Sennacherib, foe of the chosen race; in the weird relics of humanity, among which, perhaps, the stubborn Pharaoh is preserved? Away, miserable sinners; would you desecrate the holy day?" No, certainly not; we are sorry to have troubled you.

Let us try the Zoological Gardens. Why,—would heart of man e'er think it?—here is another forbidding gentleman, who growls—"Would you see the creatures described in Holy Writ, Behemoth the mighty, the terrible leviathan, the lord'y lion such as Samson slew, the camel of the Patriarchs, the ostrich that scorneth the horse and his rider, the hart that panteth for the water-brooks, the evil serpent at enmity with man for ever? Oh, for shame! for shame! begone, poor erring creatures, it is the Sabbath!" Oh, pray excuse us. We will go to the National Gallery. Why, as I live, here also is a proud young porter, who exclaims—"Abandoned mortals, do you desire to gaze upon 'The Crown of Thorns,' the 'Ecce Homo,' the 'Taking down from the Cross,' the 'Entombment,' the 'Raising of Lazarus,' the representation of the fields ripe for the harvest, the flowers arrayed in a glory greater than Solomon's, the eloquent skies of morning and of evening? Depart, ye sinful ones, know ye not what day it is? You had better adjourn to a public-house." This is very embarrassing, not to say disheartening. But turn where we may, we are confronted by gloomy moralists who forbid everything.

It is very curious, and shows what mischief lurks in apparently innocent things. Nobody would think,

to look at fossil remains, that they had a tendency to demoralize the mind. A picture, say, by Turner or Sir Edwin Landseer, presents a specious appearance of harmlessness that would almost delude anybody. The contemplation of the elephant does not seem likely to lead to vicious courses; and though the octopus has not been endowed with a fascinating exterior, it is not palpably calculated to drive one to desperate courses. Without guidance, I really should have thought that I could look at a mummy without coveting my neighbour's wife, or any other of his goods, that I could give a bun to a bear without robbing orphans, and even wonder at the megatherium without providing the papers with the materials for a ghastly tragedy. But I am thankful that I am better instructed. My teachers ask,—"Why do you not visit these perilous attractions during the week, when they may be partaken with impunity?" Well, you see, supposing (delightful idea!) that I am a working-man for the nonce; when I get home from my work I am pretty tired, and when I have had my tea I don't feel equal to going to the other end of London. Besides, I should like to take the Angel in the House and the young seraphs. Well, we are not ashamed of our workaday clothes, but we have better things, and when we go

out we like to look as respectable as we can. By the time we had changed our clothes, it would be about time to take them off again, and as for the children, we could not go away and leave them very comfortably to set fire to themselves. This seems reasonable. But, say the forbidding parties, "consider the number of people whom you would cause to work on the day set apart for rest?" Unfortunately, as we do not live under a dispensation of miracles, labour cannot be entirely suspended in modern times. If food were received down from heaven for our sustenance, if a pillar of fire illumined the darkness of our nights, and the forces of Nature were enlisted to protect us from our enemies, we might all take our ease; but we have fallen upon evil days, when comfort, safety, even existence, have to be preserved by unremitting toil and vigilant guardianship.

I am afraid the devouring element would not be so courteous as to restrain its propensities, if we were to allow the firemen to keep the Sabbath. It is doubtful whether an adequate meteor would appear to enable the gasmen to rest; and if we bade the policemen hang up their helmets and staves and forsake their beats on Sunday, it is possible that the gentlemen of larcenous and burglarious proclivities would not cease from their labours and join in the

solemn observance. If, then, we are obliged to make these exceptions to the law for the protection of our persons and property, surely we may permit a few more for the improvement of our minds and their protection from base pursuits.

But it is not abroad only that we are treated with prohibitive rigour,—the same fanaticism follows us home and into our innermost chamber. It lays its hand upon our newspaper, our history, our novel, our poem, it covers our mouth, it tries to grasp our very mind. However suggestive of good the article, however pregnant the page, touching the story, or tender the teaching of the song, if it enforce aught else but one particular dogma, it is placed under ban. Nor may we speak or think, however wisely or kindly, except to insist upon a formal rigid doctrine. Our little ones must repress the happy gaiety of childhood and walk soberly, gravely. To play, to run, to frisk (natural to children as to breathe), would be awful; and I believe they ought not to laugh. Dogs, of course, should not be permitted to bark, it would be following their avocation; the canary's cage should be covered to prevent the bird from singing; and if the world would only cease from revolving, and rest, the most perfect condition could be attained. Our longingly anticipated day is like Sancho Panza's

dinner; every dish is vetoed, until it is reduced to a Barmecide's feast. But there are, alas! daring sinners who ignore the imposed restrictions, and are happy in spite of them all. Sunday is their day of recreation, and without any *arrière pensée* they apply themselves to enjoyment with a determination that commands success. Weather seems not to make the slightest difference to them, only that they appear rather more riotously happy if it rains. They crowd omnibuses and railway-carriages, and do not mind in the least though there be double the legitimate number of passengers. They make friends with each other at once, and all seem to have pursuits, phrases, and jokes in common. You fancy they are members of one party, so familiar are they, until you find that they get out at different stations, and have never seen each other before. They are very smart or very shabby, but it makes no difference to their intercourse. When they are smart they are smart indeed. I saw on a country road the other Sunday a young couple, with their arms round each other's neck, singing like two (rather hoarse) birds, as they sauntered slowly through the drenching rain. If they had only been half-draped and Greek, it would have been a charming Idyll, and Sir Frederick Leighton would have painted them.

But what shall we say of the unfortunates who do not, cannot, enjoy Sunday? How hard is their lot! Not,—not for them are these simple pleasures, not for them their anticipation—more delightful still. They cannot count the days till the welcome morning breaks that brings surcease from toil, that opens their prison-doors, and gives to them the verdant fields, the waving trees, the running streams, the broad blue sky, and liberty. Poor creatures! I allude, of course, to persons in affluent circumstances, to whom every day is alike. Ah! let the poor be thankful that they are not even as the rich: let them rejoice with exceeding great joy that they cannot lie sluggishly in bed every morning and wear their Sunday clothes every day in the week.

A candid consideration of this question must assuredly lead us to the conclusion that the Christian Sabbath should be, not a fast, but a feast—a day of no riotous demonstration, of no indecorous mirth, but one of genial enjoyment and innocent festivity. It was so regarded by the Bard of Bemerton himself, who singeth benignly thus:—

"Thou art a day of mirth,
And where the week-days trail on ground,
Thy flight is higher, as thy birth.

O, let me take thee at the bound,
Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
Till that we both, being tossed from earth,
Fly hand in hand to heaven!"

The sun shines, the sea foams and flashes, the rivers glide swiftly and sparklingly, the birds sing happy carols, the flowers shed sweet fragrance on Sunday; why should the heart of man alone, for whom all the pleasures of creation were designed by our merciful Father, be gloomy and miserable on that day? Shakspere, greatest of philosophers as of poets, derides the unnatural doctrine, exclaiming, "If thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays!" There is no true piety, but rather much profanity and ingratitude in such a theory. "Measure not men by Sundays without regarding what they do all the week after," says wise old Fuller. With equal wisdom, and a humour characteristically pungent, the Rev. Sydney Smith describes a Sabbatarian as "a man who will do nothing on Sunday, but anything on a week-day." Never was the matchless Canon of St. Paul's wittier or wiser than in denouncing the folly and tyranny of the fanatics who go in for the bitter observance of the Sabbath,—"Ennui, wretchedness, melancholy, groans, and sighs are the offerings which these un-

happy men make to a Deity who has covered the earth with gay colours and scented it with rich perfumes, and shown us by the plan and order of His works that He has given to man something better than a bare existence, and scattered over His creation a thousand superfluous joys, which are totally unnecessary to the mere support of life."

CURIOSITY.

CURIOSITY is the curse of small communities. A kiss which in the streets would pass unobserved, as kisses ever should, re-echoes through the groves, and as the poets phrase it, "makes the welkin ring." In a village everybody deems himself privileged to pry into your affairs. Your pursuits, your pleasures, your tastes, your dress, the very constituents of your dinner do not escape the ken of the inquisitive. From this horrible scourge Londoners are happily exempt. Here Paul Pry has no vocation—here the Busy-Body has not where to set his foot. You may dine off soap and sawdust, and go about in a blanket with a colander on your head for all that any one cares. The amount of personal liberty attainable in London is the one supreme blessing to be set against its turbulent traffic, its jangling bells, its screaming locomotives, its street preachers, its organ-grinders, and

fifty other uproarious bothers. Even its fogs may perhaps be endured with a certain equanimity when you remember that they muffle unpleasant sounds, veil unpleasant sights, and hide you from the view of the censorious. The people next door know no more about you, nor you about them, than though you were both residing in different hemispheres. As for 'Over the way,' you have never bestowed a glance upon them nor they on you. You don't ask one another's names; you would not give a button for the information. So that you keep your hands off your neighbour's throat, and, what is still more important, out of his breeches-pocket, you are free to do what you please in this the least babbling of Babylons. So much for the social, or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say, the unsocial aspects of a community where curiosity is unknown.

It is a quaint remark of old Fuller that "Curiosity is a kernel of the forbidden fruit which still sticketh in the throat of a natural man, sometimes to the danger of his choking." Viewing the matter in that sense of moral philosophy wherein he took a special delight, Pope warns us that "a person who is too nice an observer of the business of the crowd, like one who is too curious in observing the labours of the bees, will often be stung for his curiosity."

Steele calls inquisitive people "the funnels of conversation, who do not take in anything for their own use, but merely to pass it to another." Plutarch tells us of a certain sententious Egyptian who, when a curious fellow would needs know what was inside a covered basket, replied, "Cum vides velatam—quid inquiris in rem conditam?" "When you see that it is veiled why do you ask any question about a hidden thing?"—a neat and simple 'set-down' founded on the appeal *ad absurdum*.

From the days of Eve to those of Fatima, the ill-starred wife of Blue Beard, and so on down to our own time, man born of woman has not ceased to twit his mother upon her curiosity. Nothing can be more unfair; for if women are curious, men are much more so. Indeed, it is no exaggeration, but the simple truth, to say that the few faults of the good sex are multiplied a thousandfold in the bad. Male curiosity is reckless, purposeless, impertinent; female curiosity is simply an enterprising spirit of scientific adventure, which, for the benefit of the human race, rifles nature of her secrets and plucks out the heart of every mystery. Besides, would steam-engines, telegraphs, telephones, penny-postage, bicycles, and all the other inventions of this marvellous age have ever been discovered if the wives of the discoverers

had not encouraged them and looked after their domestic comfort, while the discoverers themselves, the champions of curiosity, were pursuing their arduous investigations? Certainly not.

Sour are the uses of Curiosity when employed with ignoble inquisitiveness for purposes injurious to domestic peace and the sanctity of private life; but they are deliciously sweet and altogether salutary when applied to the discovery and development of arts conducive to the welfare and happiness of mankind. But for the promptings of curiosity in the human mind, coal, iron, and gold would have remained for ever in the bosom of the earth; gems of purest ray serene, instead of decking the brow of beauty, would have sparkled unseen in the 'dark' unfathomed 'caves' of ocean; nobody would ever have gone to sea, smoked a pipe, or swallowed an oyster; nor indeed would any man have been able to ascertain whether he is loved or hated by the young woman with whom he keeps company. It is awful to think what the state of the world would be if men were not inspired by fond curiosity to the popping of that momentous question on which depends their matrimonial destiny. Bachelors to a man, they would 'burst in ignorance.'

FANCIFUL ATTACHMENTS.

LEST the heading of this essay should alarm the sensibilities of those among my readers who revel in a state of single-cursedness, or excite the contemptuous incredulity of too-experienced Benedicts, let me assure them that love is not my theme, and that there is no intention to bore them with heartrending narratives of the misplaced affections of man and womankind. This is no treatise on 'spoons'—neither the tea-spooning of boyhood nor the dessert-spooning of mature manhood—neither calf-love nor yet love at first sight—nor, in short, any form whatever of that intermittent insanity, which crowns itself with orange-blossoms, and, in its pathetic honey-lunacy, fancies earth a paradise. I mean simply to chronicle a few of those eccentric attachments which most people feel towards divers and sundry articles—almost, so to speak, leading articles in their existence. Take, for

instance, a pipe. What smoker does not cherish one particular briar, meerschaum, or clay, with a most fanciful, but withal an exceeding great love? Were any accident to befall it, would he not feel as if there had occurred a death in his family, or as if he could have borne the decease of a creditor with more equanimity, and less personal discomfort? For months and years he has watched that pipe grow browner and browner, until at last he has kissed it into beautiful blackness. A thousand associations are shattered in its fall, and in bitterness of spirit the smoker moaneth 'Ichabod,' firmly believing that he never will see its like again, as "first he eyes his pipe, and then he pipes his eye."

And *à propos* of a pipe it was only the other day that I witnessed a curious instance of a man's fanaticism in that regard. I was going down to Brighton by the five o'clock express; a rigid silence was observed, according to the genial, sociable custom of our country, until we had passed Caterham junction, when a small, fat gentleman, with a face like a plum-pudding, drew solemnly from his pocket as ugly a little pipe as ever was seen. Having surveyed it over and over again, and patted it repeatedly upon its bowl with such a display of fond and tender emotion as a man of a very affectionate nature might

evince in caressing a beautiful child, he held up this paltry object to the height of his nose, and then observed, in tones the most complacent, "I suppose no gentleman would object to my smoking *this*"—as though it could make the slighest difference to a man who disliked tobacco out of what particular sort of pipe the fumes might issue. A smile stole over every countenance, but not a word was uttered; so our stout friend, taking silence for consent, lit up there and then. He continued smoking till we got to Hassock's Gate, when he put back his horrid little darling in a leathern-case, simply observing the while, "I wouldn't take £20 for it!"

This fanciful attachment to inanimate things, calls to mind Locke's story of a gentleman who had learned to dance in a room where an old trunk was part of the furniture—"The idea of this remarkable piece of household stuff had so mixed itself with the turns and steps of all his dancing, that though in that chamber he could dance excellently well, yet it was only whilst that trunk was there; nor could he perform well in any other place unless that, or some such other trunk, had its due position in the room."

I have a friend, an old Scotch lady of very ancient lineage indeed, who is passionately enamoured of her silver tea-pot. Her attachment to that tea-pot is fervid

as fanciful, yet strange to say, she attributes to it the low condition of her pecuniary estate. It appears that one of her ancestors paid £25 for the article in question in the reign of George III., and my Caledonian kinswoman, for such I am proud to say she is, argues that if that money, instead of having been expended upon a tea-pot, had been allowed to accumulate at compound interest, she and I, and all of us, might now be riding in our carriages, giving a lift to our friends, and running over our enemies. I dare say she is right. Another old gentlewoman I knew, who, as it were, swore by a venerable china sugar-basin, and worshipped that piece of stone with all the fanaticism of a Mahometan for the Kaaba. I flatter that sugar-basin in appraising its intrinsic value at five shillings sterling, but when in heedless childhood I haplessly smashed it, what reproaches dire, what woful lamentations ensued, as I was thrust into the darkness of the jam-closet, and locked in there, to reflect at leisure on the danger of suddenly breaking a fanciful attachment.

When an advertisement appears in the papers offering "a reward of £5 for a common walking-stick of no value to anybody but the owner," the reader may envy the wealth, but thoroughly sympathize with the spirit that dictated the muni-

ficent offer. The owner had lost not so many feet of wood, but so many associations—so much memory. Perhaps it was a pet shillelagh, endeared to him by the Hibernian skulls it had fractured. Perchance it was an alpenstock, recording in its notches many a victory over peak and glacier. Peradventure it was the last souvenir of a trusty comrade. Whatever its history, its owner obviously esteems it above all other sticks, and would scorn to swap it for even Aaron's rod. What man cannot remember the first real pistol of his boyhood? With what sweet credulity did he yearn to prove its penetrative power on the elephant in the perambulating menagerie! How he fought the goriest of imaginary duels. How much privation he endured in abnegation of lollipops and sour apples, that he might feed his expensive idol with villainous saltpetre! Because that first pistol happened to be a 'flint,' he is loth to acknowledge the superiority of percussion-caps, and nourishes a secret contempt for new-fangled breechloaders. In moments of confidence he brags of feats accomplished with that suicidal weapon which would put the achievements of Wimbledon entirely in the shade; and to the day of his death he cannot be made to realize that the ultimate bursting of that pistol (which blew his little finger into smithereens) did *not*

destroy the most accurate weapon boyhood was ever blest with. With something akin to this feeling veteran duellists were wont to bequeath their darling saw-handles as most precious legacies to their special friends, generally with the advice "to aim at the hip, as the crathers threw a thrifle high." Then, again, what can equal the fanciful attachment of a girl for her first doll? How maternally she fondles that thing of beauty, lavishing on it all possible tenderness. What a powerful hold that idiotic-looking, pink-eyed, flaxen-haired Albino has gained on her warm little heart! I well remember such a lassie. Her first doll was a young gentleman, evidently in the hair-dressing line, and accustomed to conceal the natural pallor of his complexion with too-obvious rouge. But he could speak! Fancy! He could, when properly jerked, ejaculate distinctly, "Papa!" The effect produced on this little damsel by his seductive appearance and vocal performances was positively delirious. She adored him; slept with him; and even (I regret to say) prayed to him as a kind of fetish! It was a frightful case of i-doll-atry! But one fatal day, a wicked and inquisitive boy got her darling into his clutch. He was a rude, but withal a mechanically-curious boy, and he insisted on anatomizing the doll, "to find out where the voice

came from." How she wept at the foul murder, and shrieked for aid! As I happened myself to be that boy, I can almost hear her agony now. I also recollect that I could only pacify her by offering to write an elegy in honour of the deceased doll, and reciting it at his funeral. But to this day that girl, I know, secretly hates me, and never since has she loved mortal doll with the passion she wasted on the first.

What angler—a craft brimming over with fanciful attachments—has not a favourite rod—a trout-rod which will throw thirty feet in the teeth of a tornado and has brought even *salmo ferox* to bay? He hath a superstition that to go fishing without that rod would entail bad luck, but that with it he can in the most unfavourable weather, and out of the most unpromising pools, coax fish by the creelful—especially if he has those extraordinary flies of his own invention, hideous, spiky insect phenomena, the like whereof no man or fish hath ever beheld. "With this fly, sir," he will say (showing you a winged reptile, apparently disguised in dodo's plumage), "I have killed my thirty pounds a day, where other men and other flies could not get a single rise!" He would never pardon your losing one of these sacred monsters, and indeed, would deem it a great liberty

on the part of his dearest friend to ask for one. As for the aforesaid rod, it was his father's, and what *he* did with it, is it not written in that lost Book of Jasher, the *Gentleman's Sporting?*

Again, there are some billiard-players who centre their affections on one particular cue. To the casual observer this looks quite an ordinary and commonplace cue, but to the player it has a value above rubies. He will gravely assure you he could not make a stroke without it. He handles it with strange tenderness, sand-papers it with minute care, chalks it with extreme assiduity, and forthwith, from sheer confidence, not in himself, but in the mysterious virtues of the cue, goes in 'to break the heart' of his adversary with the biggest cannons and the most hazardous hazards. In his mind the cue has identified itself with success, and when old age deprives his eye of its wonted accuracy and his arm of its elasticity, he will hang up that cue in his *sanctum sanctorum*, and tell (and believe) the most terrific yarns of its power of 'screwing,' or 'putting side on,' or 'following through'—and how he 'put the fifteen down in one break at pyramids,' or cleared a pool of eight twice over in one game, or made a break of one hundred and something without one single fluke in the lot!'

The inveterate cricketer has his own peculiar bat —the bat *par excellence*—the bat which will drive for six where other bats would only make a four. The only circumstance that invariably puzzles the owner of such a paragon is how any mere mortal bowler contrives to put him out at all. "That bat, sir," quoth he, "against the best bowling and fielding in the whole world, has made scores which, I can hardly expect you to believe." And straightway he enumerates some astonishing innings which, for the life of you, you cannot credit. He verily believes his own Munchausens, for he seeks, not so much self-glorification, as to invest with a halo of grandeur the bat which first raised him to the ineffable dignity of "captain of our school's first eleven," when he made two hundred thousand, first in, and not out, off the terrific bowling of the rival academy. Next comes the fox-hunter, with a select museum of whips of marvellously persuasive power, and an array of pet spurs that would tickle a gallop out of the veriest 'screw.' This hockey-player keeps a standing-forest of hump-backed sticks, worth about half-a-crown as firewood, from which nothing but death will part him. That Nimrod has the *only* fowling-piece which was ever known to kill snipe right and left at a hundred yards.

Scepticism has destroyed many old, fanciful attachments, but in those that survive there is a something quaintly suggestive and instructive—something cheering in the enthusiasm which begets and sustains them through a lifetime. At the least, the propensity to individualise an object by a species of metempsychosis of memory is not reprehensible, except, possibly, in theology. On the contrary, by relieving the familiar and common-place of their monotony, these harmless fancies teach the doctrine of sermons in stones and good in everything. These fondnesses for inanimate objects are, in sooth, highly irrational, but then, consider how few of us make Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* the rule of our life. My own private opinion, which nothing shall induce me to publish, is, that though a man with many of these crotchets may not be very great, peculiarly agreeable, or remarkably good, he is almost certain not to be a vicious man.

The origin of most fanciful attachments probably lies in the fact that no shops have as yet been opened for the sale of pleasant reveries—that there are no wholesale stores where men can purchase happy memories. We therefore cling to anything, however trivial, which at our will summons forth a host of cheering, or even pathetic and tragic associations—

anything that recalls the lost brightness of boyhood, the triumphs of youth, the struggles and sorrows of manhood. Doubtless, superstition is a component part of many of our 'little loves,' and we may hoard up a bent sixpenny-piece without caring to examine the reason why. But sentiment of some sort is the predominant element in our fanciful attachments to inanimate objects. Our likings for pet animals, being based on a reciprocity of affection, are not properly fanciful, and have not therefore been catalogued in this brief essay; nor have I ventured to include among fanciful attachments the romantic interest of a withered flower a score of years old, or the genuine passion which, like Elia's, immortalises a lock of hair with the eloquent inscription, 'Eheu, Evelina!'

MOONSHINE.

WHY should the Moon be called 'She'?

Let us weigh with judicial impartiality such evidence as is before the Court. Harris — not *Mrs.* Harris—states in his *Hermes* that "*all* nations ascribe to the Moon a feminine gender"; but the testimony of this too enthusiastic witness is flatly contradicted by those eminent sky-pilots, the Chaldæans, who positively swore (I mean, stated) their belief that the Moon was a gentleman. The Assyrians, too, worshipped a moon-god answering to the name of 'Sin.' Moreover, the moon is stated to be of the male sex in nearly all the Teutonic languages; in the Gothic and Sanscrit; so it is still with the Lithuarians and Arabians, and so was it with the ancient Mexicans, and Slavi. It is however sad to find that the Mesopotamians — whom I have always regarded with affectionate awe, and of whom

I would be the last to speak disrespectfully—actually cherished the monstrous delusion that the moon was of two sexes! But there is, luckily, overwhelming evidence to prove that the moon is of the female persuasion. The Phœnicians, Egyptians, Carthaginians—highly respectable witnesses—adored her under the aliases of Astarte, Isis, and Cœlestis. To the Gauls, she was Belisama; to the Scandinavians, Hulda; to the Suabians, Ursula; and in the Hindu legend the moon is a star-zoned goddess rejoicing in immortal youth and beauty imperishable. Next comes the Grecian Artemis; and Selene, too, who ever roves the sky in radiant chariot drawn by fiery-footed steeds. Doubtless the fable of the handsome stripling she kissed in his slumbers on Mount Athos, represents the greeting of the eastern moon to the westering sun, just as the weary wanderings of Io portray the varying lunar phases. Following Hecate, the dread empress of the realms of death, steps forth Roman Diana (originally Luna), the chaste goddess of the crystal quiver and the bow of pearl, "whom all Asia and the world worshipped," and upon whose Ephesian temple — the second wonder of the globe—fond superstition lavished all the art of Greece and all the gold of the gorgeous East. Poets, too, have celebrated Phœbe, sister of

the sun, and Cynthia of the silver horn and dragon yoke. Even our Saxon forefathers bowed down before the shrine of the moon-goddess, Eastre—witness the words Easter and Monday. Furthermore, remember the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and the Preraphaelites, and—and—and the Midshipmites. Pray what did *they* say? Why, they all with one accord declared that—but it is mere waste of stationery thus to multiply proofs of the moon's femininity.

Poetry and fable have done far more to endear moonshine to mankind than all your telescopes. Modern astronomy, which "smiles at all the magic tales of starlit bowers and planetary vales," tenders us statistics in lieu of superstitions, and cold scientific theories in exchange for romantic associations. We are told that even our old friend the Man in the Moon is a myth. A myth! when his broad, smiling features are as familiar to us as they were to Caliban and Quince; when we would take our affidavit as to his identity—aye, and the identity of his dog and his bush, too—with that delinquent never to be forgiven, who *would* gather sticks on the Sabbath. Are the sweet innocent beliefs of our childhood to be banished thus ruthlessly by the edicts of observatories? Are we to be expected to credit the assertions that only in the

broken equatorial outline of the moon exists the likeness of the famous Man; that five curiously-shaped lunar plains represent his body, legs, and arms; that the Sea of Serenity conveys the idea of a bundle of sticks; and that the Sea of Humours only suggests the semblance of the little dog trotting in front of his master? Perish the thoughts whether true or false! As to the North American Indian's ridiculous fable about a *woman* in the moon—

> "Once a warrior, very angry,
> Seized his grandmother and threw her
> Up into the sky at midnight;
> Right against the moon he threw her;
> 'Tis her body that you see there,"

it has, of course, no foundation whatever in fact, and is as contemptible as the superstition of certain tribes of Equatorial Africa—to wit—that an abandoned female called Miss Tlogo is allowed to reside in the moon.

The Chinese—who, as Celestials, are the highest possible authorities about the moon—were not only aware of the existence of a man therein, but even knew that his name was Yue-Laou, and that he edited the original *Matrimonial Gazette*. In *Hiawatha*, too, it is recorded that the Great Pearl Feather,

"He, the mightiest of magicians"—Yue-Laou in another form—inhabited the moon.

I protest against the present surveying, weighing, and mapping of the celestial capital of Fairyland. I would rather *not* be informed that the moon is ninety times less heavy and fifty times smaller than the earth; that she is only about 240,000 miles away; that she is nothing but an arid, lifeless wilderness, one half exposed to the perpetual glare of solar heat, the other shrouded in eternal night; merely a volcanic orb without air or water, or clouds, or winds, or sounds. It is, however, some comfort to remember that the atmosphere, vegetation, and habitability of our satellite continue still (to the best of my belief) to be moot points among astronomers.

"On a banni les démons et les fées;
On court, hélas! après la verité,"

and to the telescopist the 'moist star' is merely the nearest point in infinity, simply a mass of matter to be divided into continents and oceans, counties and parishes. He tells us, too, that moonlight is 300,000 times less brilliant than sunlight. Now I object to having my moonlight analyzed. Shall poetry thus be robbed of its "orbed maiden with white fire laden"? Let us rather plunge into antiquated beliefs that in an ethereal ocean she floated, a

luminous islet inhabited by the spirits of the blessed—

> "No child planet, but an isle of love."

The Chaldæan watched the moon

> "Till he had peopled her with beings bright
> As her own beams."

Some have located purgatory there; others have imagined that in the vagabond globe was the paradise of fools, once called Limbo, inhabited by embryos, idiots, and freaks of nature in her first of April moods. But John Milton believes that

> "Those argent fields more likely habitants
> Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold
> Betwixt the angelical and human kind."

A sort of half-way house, perhaps, for our guardian angels; or, say, the first mile-stone on the road to heaven.

Moreover, Sir Paul Neal—an amateur (but thoroughly trustworthy) astronomer of the seventeenth century—vowed that he saw an elephant in the moon; and there are many pious Hindus who will declare that the outline of a hare—perhaps a March hare—is distinctly visible therein. Even philosophic Lucian wrote a *True History of Things Discovered in the Moon.* There are, too, scores of

treatises on the possibility of personally-conducted trips to the moon, such as *Toralva's Journey to the Moon*, and Astolpho's lunar explorations in *Orlando Furioso*. Even bishops—not to mention Jules Verne—have published *The Discovery of a New World*, and the *Voyage of Domingo Gonzales to the Moon*. There is, consequently, no necessity to strengthen so strong a case by the evidence either of Old Mother Goose, who, as we all know, "flew up to the Moon," or of the celebrated cow whose jump over that luminary is unquestionably the best on record.

Some of the ancient notions about the moon were decidedly eccentric. Speaking collectively, it was then believed that the moon ripened fruit, withered trees, putrefied meat, promoted digestion, sent panic, nightmares, famine, pestilence, and sudden death, fostered longevity, patronized architects, infants, witches, ghosts; that she was the arbitress of victory, and the guardian of flocks, sailors, thieves, and vagabonds. In short, to the old world the moon was what Boston is to Yankees,—"the hub of all creation," or, as Appuleius puts it, "the mother of all things, who rolled the heavens round the steady poles, who illumined the sun, who governed this globe, the spirit-world, the stars, the seasons, and the elements." Even Cicero believed in the music of the spheres,

and described the lunar tone as the gravest and faintest in the celestial gamut. Pythagoras, too, was supposed to have the power of writing upon the moon by means of a magic mirror.

Can you tell me why dogs bay the moon? Do they, as Byron says,

"Feel some abstraction when they gaze on her"?

Can there be canine traditions about Actæon, or the dog which trots at the heels of the Man in the Moon?

As to the curious influence of the moon on the brains of lunatics ("When the moon's in the full, wit's in the wane," runs our proverb), I decline to make any remarks whatsoever—personalities must always be avoided; nor have I anything to say about the mysterious connection between rheumatism and moonshine, except that Blanchard states in his *Total Eclipse* that

"It's the change of the moon that *you* want, Mrs. Jones,
To cure your complaint, the rheumatics."

Strange to say, the comicality of moonshine seems to have almost escaped public notice. Nevertheless, there is no little pleasantry to be extracted from the lunar 'Sea of Humours.' For instance, in that very fine ode of Keats on Moonlight occurs this elaborate absurdity—

"O moon, thou art a relief
To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps
Within its pearly house."

Edgar Poe raves about

"The turtle-dove that gloats on the moon."

Whereas all moral turtles—and all turtles are moral—go to bed in the gloaming.

Evidently the poets are weak in natural history; for Hood believes that the moon

"Spills in winding streams
Sparkles and midnight gleams,
For fishes to new-gloss their argent scales."

There is, too, something odd and ominous in the selection of the honey-moon as the happiest period of wedded life, considering that the moon was the emblem of inconstancy and indecision. Very significant, too, was that belief of the Mesopotamians that the man who worshipped the moon as a goddess would infallibly be henpecked—thus clearly showing why

"Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs"

to the empress of the skies, and why Byron declared

"The devil's in the moon for mischief."

There is also a rather amusing Moslem legend about the moon stooping from her station in the sky

to salute Mohammed in the purest Arabic. After accomplishing seven revolutions round the Caaba, the eccentric planet, suddenly contracting her dimensions, entered at the collar and issued forth at the sleeve of his shirt! A superb instance of that moonshine which the slang dictionary defines as "palaver, deception, humbug."

As for the manufacturers of mock moonshine—ancient priests who made moons appear in their temple just as the Veiled Prophet caused a sham luminary to rise out of the holy well of Nekshеb—such criminals ought to have been gored to death on the horns of the crescent or slowly consumed by lunar caustic.

To unfortunate Britons, however, the worship of the host of heaven, "of the moon walking in brightness" (which Job found hard to avoid) seems almost unaccountable. Why? "Now our moon at the brightest," says Douglas Jerrold, "what is it? A dim, dull, counterfeit moon—a pewter shilling." But in the dark violet serenity of Oriental eventides blazes a sphere of pale fire so refulgent that

> "The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
> Of silver radiance trembling round the world."

No wonder, therefore, that heavenly bodies become divinities in the vivid imagination of the east. No

wonder that the crescent of Mohammed is figured on the red battle-flag of Islam. No wonder the lunatic is a saint in many parts of the east. Nevertheless, muffled though our moonlight is, sweet Luna's brow is encircled with so bright a diadem of fairy memories that her every beam seems to us when in the mood for reverie a messenger from Queen Mab, bidding us to elfin carnival of

"Urchins, ouphes, and fairies—moonshine revellers"—

and

"The demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,

and a host of span-long elves who

"Play with falling stars,
And mount the spheres of fire to kiss the moon."

"Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania," growls jealous Oberon, scowling the while at Bottom, with whose hairy ears his darling queen is coquettishly toying. In the broad shadow of that silver-frosted oak, Falstaff is bellowing at the pinches of the meadow-sprites so lustily that we can hardly hear the notes of Herne the Hunter's horn, or the full cry of his spectral hounds. See how the moon-calf Caliban trembles while his dam—like Horace's Canidia—is muttering spells potent "to control the

moon," and the three witches of Forres, mumbling awful incantations, stir the hell-broth in the bubbling caldron. High in the cloudless sky above,

> "The queen-moon is on her throne,
> Clustered around by all her starry fays."

In truth, the moon-dial is the only horologe of Faery, and the moon herself assuredly

> "The fairies' armourer that kept
> Their burnish'd helms, and crowns, and corslets bright,
> Their spears and glittering mails."

Elia abusing moonlight, "with its shadowy and spectral appearances, that cold ghost of the sun," exclaims, "I am none of her minions. I hold with the Persian." As if the 'glittering argentry' were not a lovelier, purer light than that of day. Says dear old Christopher North—"No shape so beautiful as the crescent 'sharpening its mooned horns.' The loveliest of all light is that which precedes the moon, while yet her unseen orb is journeying up from behind the hill, and you are uncertain over what place she will raise her silver rim. How her brightness deepens the blue of night! In infancy the moon appears something fair and far off in the sky, and to look on it sometimes stills our eyes through their tears. In boyhood, the glorious globe, in its own independent

being, is not thought to borrow its lustre from the sun. In youth's shining prime we encircle her with love-dreams as with a tender halo, or with the glow of our passion vivify the sole Queen of Night. Into the meditative mind of manhood soberer and more solemn fancies flow from the Silver Urn."

Depend upon it a vast majority of mankind will never fully appreciate the exquisite beauty of moonshine until they have to pay for it. In fact it ought to be carefully bottled like sparkling Dantzic Water; for it is lamentable to reflect what myriads of life's moon-beams—surely a splendour born of softest symphonies and sweetest scents, such as the night-breeze coaxes from Æolian lyre and creamy cactus-bloom—are absolutely wasted.

The moon even as the genius of Goldsmith touches nothing without beautifying it—

> "With silver lip *kissing* dead things to life."

Mark, too, the contrasting imagery of Shakspere and Scott—

> "How sweet the moonlight *sleeps* upon this bank!"

and

> "The stag at eve had drunk his fill
> Where *danced* the moon on Monan's rill."

Most suggestive, also, is the charm in these lines of Tennyson—

> "The music of the moon
> Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale."

But, of all our great moon-poets—Shakspere, Ben Jonson, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Hood, Moore, and others—none, to my thinking, has ever equalled the sublimity of Milton's description, wherewith I conclude this chapter—

> "Now glowed the firmament
> With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
> The starry host, rode brighest, till the Moon,
> Rising in clouded majesty, at length
> Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
> And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw."

Good night, and pleasant dreams.

"HOW IS IT WITH THEE, SWEET?"

SEVERED from thee, Beloved,
By the remorseless sea,
O how my heart doth covet
Happy report of thee!
Let not the dear vows perish
Breathed when we used to meet;
Dost thou their memory cherish?
How is it with thee, Sweet?

Lone is my heart and weary!
A message of constancy
Over the mountains dreary
Fain would I send to thee,
Over the stormy ocean,
Wafted by Zephyrs fleet,
Asking in fond devotion,
How is it with thee, Sweet?

Tell me, my Love, my Glory,
How is it with thee, Sweet?
No more delightful story,
Ever my ears could greet,
Than the true answer bearing
Joy from thy calm retreat,
Queen of my Heart, declaring,
How it is with thee, Sweet.

RANDOM CURIOSITIES OF RACING.

WITHOUT attempting anything so ambitious as an inquiry into the origin and progress of the most popular of our pastimes—an investigation which, commencing with the Mithraic festivals in Persia, centuries before the Christian era, might be brought down to the most famous of modern equine achievements at Epsom and Goodwood—it may be permitted to lay before the best and most beautiful of readers a few random curiosities of Racing. These shall be picked up not so much upon the beaten tracks of the turf, as in nooks, lanes, and by-ways of antiquarian research; and they shall relate not simply to racers running on four legs, but also at times to those who are (or were) provided only with two.

Chester races are probably as old as any in the kingdom. Mr. Lysons, in his *Magna Britannia*, states that there are among the corporation records

some old articles of a race for two bells, the earliest date being 1512. In 1609, Mr. William Lester, mercer, and Robert Amory, ironmonger, sheriff of the city, "at his, the last-mentioned person's, own cost, did cause three silver bells to be made of good value, which bells he appointed to be run for with Horses upon St. George's Day, upon the Rhode Dee, from the new tower to the water, then turning, to run up to the Watergate, that horse which come first there to have the beste bell; the seconde horse to have the seconde bell for that year, putting in money and sureties to deliver in the bells that day twelvemonth." The other bell was run for the same day, upon the like conditions. This gave rise to the saying of "Bearing the bell." The bells and a silver bowl were brought down to the course with great pomp, as a curious MS. in the Harleian collection in the British Museum clearly proves. Mr. Amory's name survives in a jingling verse still popular in Cheshire—

"Amor is love, and Amory is his name
That did begin this pomp and princely game.
The charge is great to him that all begun;
Let him be satisfied, now all is done."

Public spirit, like virtue, would seem to have been its own reward in the case of this enterprising

ironmonger. There is something ironical in the advice to "be satisfied, now all is done." Though he exerted himself so liberally, and entertained the citizens so jubilantly in 1610, we find from the municipal records that only two years afterwards, 1612, it was ordered that "the sports and recreations used on St. George's Day shall in future be done by the direction of the mayor and citizens, and not of any private person"—a most ungrateful 'snub.' No authority seems to have come to light for tracing the gradual alterations by which the bells and the bowl of these ancient races were converted into the ordinary prizes at similar meetings.

Coming down to much more modern times, we find mention in the chronicles of the eighteenth century, of some races which would surprise, if not edify, the Turfites of the present age. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the date following may be read this strange statement:—At thirty-five minutes past ten in the evening of Tuesday, July 24th, 1773, was determined a match between Thomas Walker, Esq., of Mickleam, in Surrey, and Captain Adam Hay, for four hundred guineas, which was won by the latter. Mr. Walker rode his own hackney, and Captain Mulcaster rode for Captain Hay. They set out at six on Monday morning from Portland Street,

London, and the winner arrived at Ousbridge, York, in forty hours thirty-five minutes. Mr. Walker's horse tired within six miles of Tadcaster, and it is supposed will die. They rode the first ninety miles in six hours! The winning mare drank twelve bottles of wine during the journey, and on Thursday was so well as to take her exercise on Knavesmire." "There is no name disgraceful enough," exclaims *Mr. Sylvanus Urban*, "to characterize this sort of diversion."

The following amusing paragraph is from *Parker's London News* of Monday, June 8th, 1724:—"On Wednesday in the Whitsun a race was run at Northampton for five guineas between two bulls, four cows, and a calf; the first were rid by men, the last by a boy. The cows threw their riders, and the calf tumbled down with his, and was thereby distanced, so that one of the bulls won the wager, before a vast concourse of people." It would be interesting to know what the bull did with the wager after he had won it.

On November 5th, 1780, might have been witnessed in Bloomsbury a remarkable race against time. A man seventy-five years old, for a wager of a guinea, ran round Queen Square, Ormond Street, seventeen times, being four miles and a half. He

was allowed an hour, and performed it in two minutes within the time. Poor old fellow! Surely some charitable soul, pitying his sad case, might have made him a present of a guinea, without subjecting him to such an ordeal.

In the annals of Racing, there are few more curious incidents than that which we find recorded thus in a Sussex newspaper of 1786:—"At Brighton, on August 2nd, an uncommon race was run for one hundred guineas a side, which afforded excellent sport for the diversion of the company. A military gentleman, with a jockey on his back weighing 7st. 5lb., booted and spurred, ran against a fat bullock, unmounted, across the Steine, and won with great ease. The bets before starting were ten to won against the winner." The fat bullock was, to speak *Hibernice*, by far the wiser man of the two. With what scorn must he have contemplated the military gentleman with the jockey on his back! It is to be hoped that the jockey used his spurs.

What droll fellows our grandfathers must have been, and what tame grandsons they have! Fancy to yourself an officer engaging in such an escapade as is chronicled in the *Annual Register*, under date August 13th, 1803:—"A whimsical exhibition took place to-day on the racecourse at Brighton. Captain

Otto, of the Sussex Militia, booted, and mounted by *a grenadier of* 18-*stone weight*, was matched to run fifty yards against a pony carrying a feather, to run one hundred and fifty; but Captain Otto's rider tumbled over his neck, which he was very near cracking, and consequently he lost the bet. The next match was the same gentleman, with the same grenadier on his back, to run fifty yards against a noble Lord, carrying a feather, who was to run one hundred. He was considerably distanced by the latter." What a subject for a picture—that gallant captain of Militia running a race on foot, with a grenadier of enormous corpulency on his back! Ah, those were jolly days! Fun is dead and buried.

In the first decade of the present century, there was no more celebrated lady upon the Turf than Mrs. Thornton, of whose proceedings on the race-course of York in the summer of 1804, an eye-witness gives an animated account:—"Never was before witnessed such a concourse of people as were assembled on the racecourse of York on this day, drawn together by a match rode by Mrs. Thornton, the wife of Colonel Thornton, of Thornville Royal, well known to the sporting world, against Mr. Flint, for 500 guineas each—p.p. 1000 guineas bye—four miles. The spectators were estimated at 100,000,

at least, nearly ten times the number that were present at Knavesmire when Bay Malton ran; or when Eclipse went over the course, leaving the two best horses of the day a mile and a half behind! About four o'clock, Mrs. Thornton appeared upon the ground, full of spirits, her horse led by Colonel Thornton. Afterwards came her antagonist. They started about ten minutes past four o'clock. The lady took the lead for upwards of three miles, in most capital style. Her horse, however, was perceived to have much the shorter stroke of the two. When within a mile of being home, Mr. Flint pushed forward and got the lead, which he kept. Mrs. Thornton used every exertion, but finding it impossible to win the race, out of humanity to her horse she drew up in a sportsmanlike style when within about two distances. The race was run in 9 min. 59 sec." Colonel Thornton refused to pay the bets lost by his wife; and not only did Mr. Flint and he come to blows, but law proceedings ensued, in which Lord Ellenborough gave judgment, with no little display of righteous indignation, against the recusant husband, who also got into disgrace with the Jockey Club.

Nothing daunted, the lady returned to the charge, the year following, and proved victorious over another

antagonist. The story runs glowingly. "On the 24th August, 1805, Mrs. Thornton undertook to ride two miles against Mr. Buckle, the jockey, well known at Newmarket and other places of sport as a rider of the first celebrity. Mrs. Thornton appeared dressed for the contest in a purple cap and waistcoat, nankeen-coloured skirts, purple shoes, and embroidered stockings. Mr. Buckle was dressed in a blue cap, with a blue-bodied jacket and white sleeves. Mrs. Thornton carried 9st. 6lb.; Mr. Buckle, 13st. 6lb. At half-past three they started. Mrs. Thornton took the lead, which she kept for some time. Mr. Buckle then put in trial his jockeyship and passed the lady, which advantage he kept for only a few lengths, when Mrs. Thornton, by the most excellent, we may truly say, horsemanship, pushed forward, and came in in a style far superior to anything of the kind we ever witnessed, gaining the race by half a length. Her riding was magnificent, and on her winning she was hailed with reiterated shouts of congratulation."

Turning to foot-racers, here is one, a cotton-spinner by trade, who deserves to be remembered by posterity for his indomitable pluck. It happened in this wise:—"A foot-race for ten guineas was run near Manchester between a cotton-spinner and a hatter of that town, when the former being the best runner was stopped

at about a quarter of a mile after starting by a friend of the latter. The spinner, however, knocking down the intruder, fell over him, rose again, and actually beat his antagonist by upwards of 40 yards; the whole being one mile, which the winner ran in four minutes and a half."

A curious race of stage-coaches against time is thus tersely chronicled:—"Started from Leicester, on the 7th August, 1808, the Patriot coach, at 7.50, to Nottingham; arrived there exactly at 12.10; performed by Thomas Pettifor, to Loughborough, and Simpson, to Nottingham, carrying about six passengers. Started from Leicester, on the same morning, the Defiance coach, at 7.55, to Nottingham; arriving there exactly at 10.10, carrying thirteen passengers!" In a Scottish magazine, for November, 1812, I find the following record of a disaster, whereof the money value is assessed with characteristic coolness and accuracy:—"In the month of October, 1812, one of the Glasgow coaches was overturned, in consequence of running a race with a post-chaise on the road from Edinburgh, whereby a Mr. Brown was killed and his wife so bruised as to be in imminent danger. A verdict has since been found, in consequence of an action brought in the Court of Sessions against the proprietors of both

the coach and chaise. Lord Meadowbank, Ordinary, has found the defendant liable to the following damages:—To Mrs. Brown, in compensation of damages suffered by her person, £300; to her for the loss of her husband, £200; to each of the children, eight in number, £130 each, £1040; with full expense of process, £1540." Poor Mr. Brown! He did not count for much—£100 less for his death than for the injuries done to his widow. Oh, who would not be a woman!

Hone, in his *Every-Day Book*, makes mention of a race at Brighton, between a lady and a gentleman, in which the latter was worsted, as in right of his sex he well deserved to be:—"On the 25th Sept., 1825, a gentleman and a lady came out of one of the hotels near the Steyne, and after taking a fair start, set off running round the Steyne. They both ran very swiftly, but the young lady bounded forward with the agility of the chamois and the fleetness of the deer, and returned to the spot from whence they started a considerable distance before the gentleman. She appeared much pleased with her victory. There were but few persons on the Steyne at the time, but those who were there expressed their admiration at the swiftness of the second Atalanta."

Writing in *Notes and Queries*, Mr. Henry T. Riley

makes the following amazing statement:—"During the summer of 1824, I remember seeing at Whitworth, in Lancashire, two strange races. On one occasion two men ran on Whitworth Moor with only a small belt around the loins. On the other occasion the runners were six in number, stark naked, the distance being seven miles, or seven times round the moor. There were hundreds, perhaps thousands of spectators, men and women, and it did not appear to shock them as being anything out of the ordinary course of events." He conjectures that it is with reference to this indecorous usage that the Lancashire riddle says—

"As I was going over Rowley Moor, Rowley Moor shak'd;
I saw four-and-twenty men running stark nak'd;
The first was last, and the last was first."

But this is supposed to be in allusion to the spokes of a wheel. A more recent correspondent to the same periodical asserts that races not unlike those which so scandalized Mr. Riley are still in vogue in South Staffordshire. It is a long way off, and unfortunately beyond the jurisdiction of the Lord Chamberlain.

But these unseemly contests have the sanction of a still more remote antiquity. In a MS. diary of Sir Erasmus Philipps, fifth baronet, of Picton Castle,

who died in 1743, will be found a curious illustration of the amusements of the Oxonians in the eighteenth century. Sir Erasmus had just matriculated at Oxford, and was employing his leisure in visiting places of note in its vicinity. What he saw upon one occasion let his diary relate:—

"1720, Sept. 19th. Rode out to New Woodstock, seven miles from Oxford. Dined at the Bear, 2*s.* 6*d.* ordinary. In the evening rode to Woodstock Park, where saw a foot-race between Groves (Duke Wharton's running footman) and Phillips (Mr. Diston's). My namesake ran the four miles round the course in eight minutes, and won the race, and thereby his master £1000, the sum Groves and he (*who were both stark naked*) started for. On this occasion, there was a most prodigious concourse of people. Returned to Woodstock, whence, after some refreshment, galloped to Oxford."

In the summer of 1863 a race between an elephant and a pony, accompanied by several amateur pedestrians, took place on the Aintree Racecourse, and excited much interest. That an elephant should be capable of thus competing with ponies and human bipeds awakened no little surprise, but a reference to Sir Emerson Tennent's well-known book on Ceylon threw some light upon the subject. Having described

the construction of the elephant's legs, adapting them to the great weight they have to raise and carry, he adds that their formation renders his gait not a gallop, as has been somewhat loosely asserted, but a shuffle, which he can increase at pleasure to a pace as rapid as that of a man at full speed; but this he cannot maintain for any considerable time.

But though bullocks, elephants, men, and other inferior animals occasionally indulge in racing, your true racer is the horse. The most famous race-horse that ever lived was probably Eclipse, who died on the 28th February, 1789, at Canons, in Middlesex, at the advanced age of twenty-five. He had received his name from being born during an eclipse, and it became curiously significant and appropriate when, in mature life, he was found to surpass all contemporary horses in speed. He was bred by the Duke of Cumberland, younger brother of George III., and afterwards became the property of Dennis O'Kelly, a gentleman of large fortune, who died in December, 1787, bequeathing this favourite horse, and another, along with all his brood-mares, to his brother Philip, in whose possession Eclipse came to his end. For many years Eclipse lived in retirement from the turf, but was in another way a source of large income to his master at Clay Hill, near Epsom, whither

many curious strangers resorted to see him. They used to learn with surprise, for the practice was not common then as it is now, that the life of Eclipse was insured for some thousands of pounds. When, after the death of Dennis O'Kelly, it became necessary to remove Eclipse to Canons, the poor beast was so worn out that a carriage had to be constructed to carry him. The secret of his immense success in racing was revealed after death in the unusual size of his heart, which weighed thirteen pounds.

It is a matter less of surprise than regret that there is no authentic account of the much-discussed race between a hare and a tortoise, in which the latter is said to have been victorious. Assuredly that was a curiosity of racing to the full as wonderful as true.

ASINI OMNES.

THE smaller section of mankind
Has been divided into 'classes'
The larger takes a finer name
And proudly calls itself the 'masses.'
This crude arrangement of our race
All rules of common sense surpasses;
We, human bodies, only need
One grand denomination—ASSES.
Man, mighty man, is but an ass-
-iduous inflater of small bubbles;
And lovely woman is an ass-
-uager of all his cares and troubles.
The House of Commons is an ass-
-embly that oft befools the nation;
The House of Lords, too, is an ass-
-ociate in all its legislation.

The Heir Apparent is an ass-
-ured friend of all that's good and pleasant,
A Prince with princely sympathies
Beloved alike by Peer and Peasant
Great Bismarck always was an ass-
-enter to Germany's pretensions;
France longs to prové herself an ass-
-ailant of all his wise intentions.
And *you*, too, Reader, you're an ass-
-ertor of Honour's cause. All merit
That glorifies the human race
You in your noble self inherit.

AND SO

FAREWELL!

RICHARD CLAY & SONS,
BREAD STREET HILL, LONDON,
Bungay, Suffolk.

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